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THE  
VISION  
OF  
COLUMBUS.  
A POEM,  
IN NINE BOOKS.

BY JOEL BARLOW.

THE FIFTH EDITION, CORRECTED.

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Tu spiegherai, Colombo, a un novo polo  
Lontane sì le fortunate antenne,  
Ch'a pena seguirà con gli occhi il volo  
La Fama, c' hà mille occhi e mille penne.  
Canti ella Alcide, e Bacco, e di te solo  
Basti a' posteri tuoi, ch' alquanto accenne;  
Che quel poco darà lunga memoria  
Di Poema degnissima, e d'istoria.

*Gierusalemme Liberata. Canto XV. Sta. 32.*

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TO WHICH IS ADDED,  
THE CONSPIRACY OF KINGS:  
A POEM,  
BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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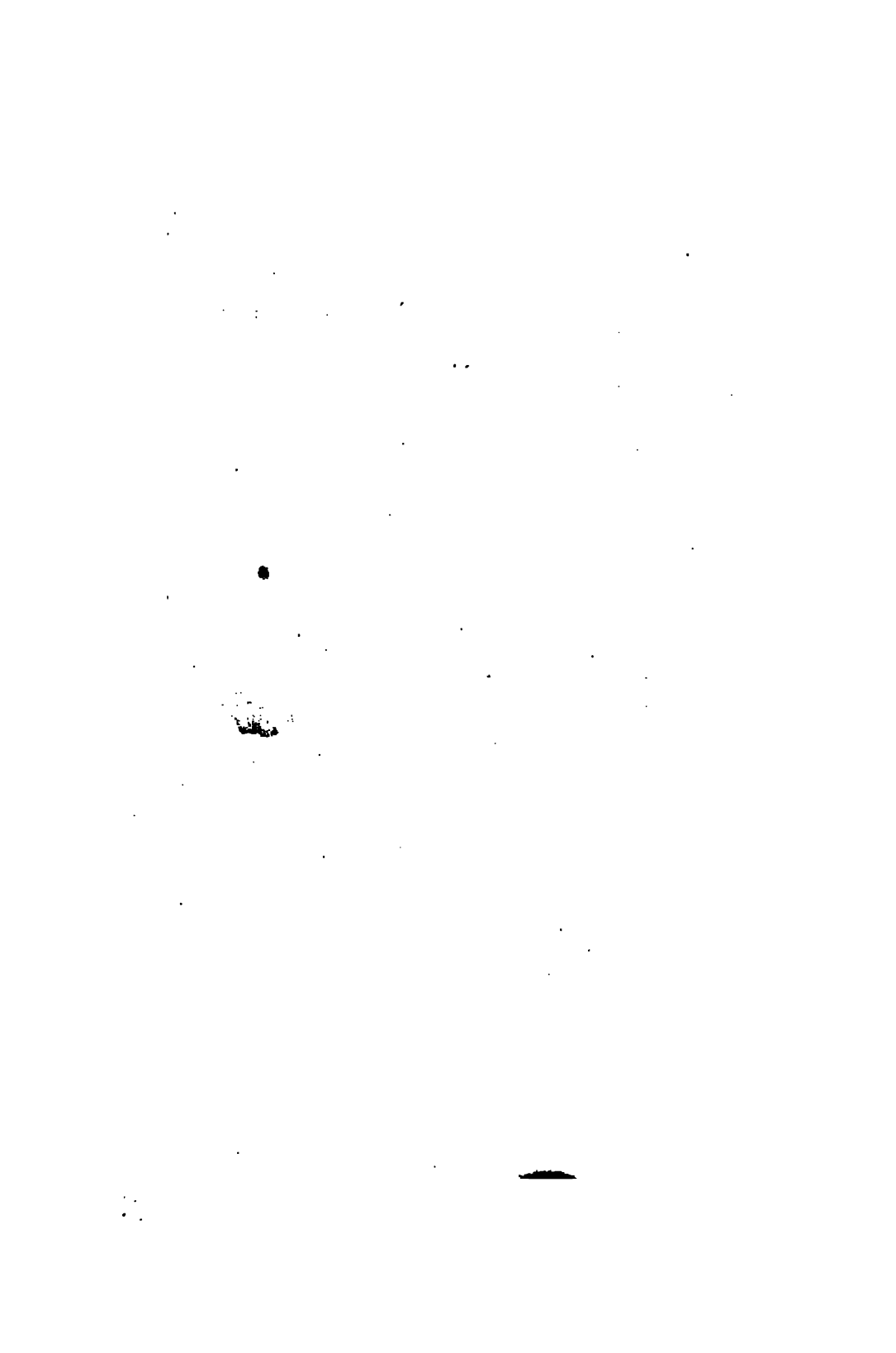
## INTRODUCTION.

EVERY circumstance relating to the discovery and settlement of America, is an interesting object of enquiry. Yet, it is presumed, from the present state of literature in the United States, that many persons, who might be entertained with an American production of this kind, are but slightly acquainted with the life and character of that great man, whose extraordinary genius led him to the discovery of the continent, and whose singular sufferings ought to excite the indignation of the world.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS was born in the republic of Genoa, about the year 1447, at a time when the navigation of Europe was scarcely extended beyond the limits of the Mediterranean. The mariner's compass had been invented and in common use for more than a century; yet with the help of this sure guide, prompted by the most ardent spirit of discovery, and encouraged by the patronage of princes, the mariners of those days rarely ventured from the sight of land. They acquired great applause by sailing along the coast of Africa, and discovering some of the neighbouring islands; and after pushing their researches with the

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## INTRODUCTION.

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## 2 INTRODUCTION.

greatest industry and perseverance for more than half a century, the Portuguese, who were the most fortunate and enterprising, extended their discoveries southward no farther than the equator.

THE rich commodities of the East had, for several ages, been brought into Europe by the way of the Red-Sea and the Mediterranean; and it had now become the object of the Portuguese to find a passage to India, by sailing round the southern extremity of Africa, and then taking an eastern course. This great object engaged the general attention of mankind, and drew into the Portuguese service adventurers from every maritime nation in Europe. Every year added to their experience in navigation, and seemed to promise a reward to their industry. The prospect, however, of arriving at India was extremely distant; fifty years perseverance in the same track, had brought them only to the equator; and it was probable that as many more would elapse before they could accomplish their purpose. But Columbus, by an uncommon exertion of genius, formed a design no less astonishing to the age in which he lived, than beneficial to posterity. This design was to sail to India by taking a western direction. By the accounts of travellers who had visited India, that country seemed almost without limits on the east; and, by attending

attending to the spherical figure of the earth, Columbus drew this conclusion—that the Atlantic ocean must be bounded on the west either by India itself, or by some great continent not far distant from it.

THIS extraordinary man, who was now about twenty-seven years of age, appears to have possessed every talent, requisite to form and execute the greatest enterprises. He was early educated in all the useful sciences that were taught in that day. He had made great proficiency in geography, astronomy and drawing, as they were necessary to his favourite pursuit of navigation. He had now been a number of years in the service of the Portuguese, and had acquired all the experience that their voyages and discoveries could afford. His courage and perseverance had been put to the severest test, and the exercise of every amiable and heroic virtue rendered him universally known and respected. He had married a Portuguese lady, by whom he had two sons, Diego and Ferdinand; the younger of whom is the historian of his life.

SUCH was the situation of Columbus, when he formed and thoroughly digested a plan, which, in its operation and consequences, unfolded to the view of mankind one half of the globe, diffused

wealth and dignity over the other, and extended commerce and civilization through the whole. To corroborate the theory which he had formed of the existence of a western continent, his discerning mind, which always knew the application of every circumstance that fell in his way, had observed several facts, which by others would have passed unnoticed. In his voyages to the African islands, he had found, floating ashore after a long western storm, pieces of wood carved in a curious manner, canes of a size unknown in that quarter of the world, and human bodies with very singular features. Fully confirmed in the opinion that a considerable portion of the earth was still undiscovered, his genius was too vigorous and persevering to suffer an idea of this importance to rest merely in speculation, as it had done in the minds of Plato and Seneca, who appear to have had conjectures of a similar nature. He determined therefore to bring his favourite theory to the test of experiment. But an object of that magnitude required the patronage of a prince; and a design so extraordinary, met with all the obstructions, delays and disappointments, which an age of superstition could invent, and which personal jealousy and malice could magnify and encourage. Happily for mankind, in this instance, a genius, capable of devising the greatest under-

undertakings, associated in itself a degree of patience and enterprise; modesty and confidence, which rendered him superior, not only to these misfortunes; but to all the future calamities of his life. Excited by the most ardent enthusiasm to be the discoverer of new continents, and fully sensible of the advantages that would result to mankind from such discoveries, he had the mortification to waste away eighteen years of his life, after his system was well established in his own mind, before he could obtain the means of executing his designs. The greatest part of this period was spent in successive and fruitless solicitations, in Genoa, Portugal, and Spain. As a duty to his native country, he made his first proposal to the Senate of Genoa; where it was soon rejected. Conscious of the truth of his theory, and of his own abilities to execute his design, he retired without dejection from a body of men who were incapable of forming any just ideas upon the subject; and applied with fresh confidence to John the Second, king of Portugal, who had distinguished himself as the great patron of navigation, and in whose service Columbus had acquired a reputation which entitled him and his project to general confidence and approbation. But here he suffered an insult much greater than a direct refusal. After referring the examination of his



scheme to the council who had the direction of naval affairs, and drawing from him his general ideas of the length of the voyage and the course he meant to take, that great monarch had the meanness to conspire with this council to rob Columbus of the glory and advantage he expected to derive from his undertaking. While Columbus was amused with this negotiation, in hopes of having his scheme adopted and patronised, a vessel was secretly dispatched, by order of the king, to make the intended discovery. Want of skill and perseverance in the pilot rendered the plot unsuccessful; and Columbus, on discovering the treachery, retired with an ingenuous indignation from a court capable of such duplicity.

HAVING now performed what was due to the country that gave him birth, and to the one that had adopted him as a subject, he was at liberty to court the patronage of any prince who should have the wisdom and justice to accept his proposals. He had communicated his ideas to his brother Bartholomew, whom he sent to England to negotiate with Henry the Seventh; at the same time that he went himself into Spain to apply in person to Ferdinand and Isabella, who governed the united kingdoms of Arragon and Castile. The circumstances of his brother's application in England, which

which appears to have been unsuccessful, is not to my purpose to relate ; and the limits prescribed to this Introduction will prevent the detail of all the particulars relating to his own negotiation in Spain. In this negotiation Columbus spent eight years in the various agitations of suspense, expectation and disappointment ; till at length his scheme was adopted by Isabella, who undertook, as queen of Castile, to defray the expences of the expedition ; and declared herself, ever after, the friend and patron of the hero who projected it.

COLUMBUS, who, during all his ill success in the negotiation, never abated any thing of the honours and emoluments which he expected to acquire in the expedition, obtained from Ferdinand and Isabella a full stipulation of every article contained in his first proposals. He was constituted high admiral and viceroy of all the seas, islands, and continents which he should discover ; with power to receive one tenth of the profits arising from their productions and commerce. These offices and emoluments were to be hereditary in his family.

THESE articles being adjusted, the preparations for the voyage were brought forward with rapidity ; but they were by no means adequate to the importance of the expedition. Three small vessels,

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scarcely sufficient in size to be employed in the coasting business, were appointed to traverse the vast Atlantic; and to encounter the storms and currents that might be expected in so long a voyage, through distant and unknown seas. These vessels, as might be expected in the infancy of navigation, were ill constructed, in a poor condition, and manned by seamen unaccustomed to distant voyages. But the tedious length of time which Columbus had spent in solicitation and suspense, and the prospect of being able soon to obtain the object of his wishes, induced him to overlook what he could not easily remedy, and led him to disregard those circumstances which would have intimidated any other mind. He accordingly equipped his small squadron with as much expedition as possible, manned with ninety men, and victualled for one year. With these, on the 3d of August 1492, amidst a vast crowd of anxious spectators, he set sail on an enterprise, which, if we consider the ill condition of his ships, the inexperience of his sailors, the length and uncertainty of his voyage, and the consequences that flowed from it, was the most daring and important that ever was undertaken. He touched at some of the Portuguese settlements in the Canary Isles; where, although he had been but a few days out, he found his vessels  
needed

needed refitting. He soon made the necessary repairs, and took his departure from the westernmost islands that had hitherto been discovered. Here he left the former track of navigation, and steered his course due west.

Nor many days after he had been at sea, he began to experience a new scene of difficulty. The sailors now began to contemplate the dangers and uncertain issue of a voyage, the nature and length of which was left entirely open to conjecture. Besides the fickleness and timidity natural to men unaccustomed to the discipline of a sea-faring life, several circumstances contributed to inspire an obstinate and mutinous disposition, which required the most consummate art, as well as fortitude, in the admiral to controul. Having been three weeks at sea, and experienced the uniform course of the trade winds, which always blow in a western direction, they contended that, should they continue the same course for a longer period, the same winds would never permit them to return to Spain. The magnetic needle began to vary its direction. This being the first time that phenomenon was ever discovered, it was viewed by the sailors with astonishment, and considered as an indication that nature itself had changed her course, and that Providence was determined to punish their audacity, in venturing

venturing so far beyond the ordinary bounds of man. They declared that the commands of their sovereign had been fully obeyed, in their proceeding so many days in the same direction, and so far surpassing the attempts of all former navigators, in quest of new discoveries. Every talent, requisite for governing, soothing and tempering the passions of men, is conspicuous in the conduct of Columbus on this occasion. The dignity and affability of his manners, his surprising knowledge and experience in naval affairs, his unwearied and minute attention to the duties of his command, gave him a complete ascendancy over the minds of his men, and inspired that degree of confidence which would have maintained his authority in almost any possible circumstances. But here, from the nature of the undertaking, every man had leisure to feed his imagination with all the gloominess and uncertainty of the prospect. They found, every day, that the same steady gales carried them with great rapidity from their native country, and indeed from all countries of which they had any knowledge. Notwithstanding all the variety of management with which Columbus addressed himself to their passions—sometimes by soothing them with the prognostics of discovering land, sometimes by flattering their ambition and feasting their avarice with the glory and  
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and wealth they would acquire from discovering those rich countries beyond the Atlantic, and sometimes by threatening them with the displeasure of their sovereign, should their timidity and disobedience defeat so great an object—their uneasiness still increased. From secret whisperings, it arose to open mutiny and dangerous conspiracy. At length they determined to rid themselves of the remonstrances of Columbus, by throwing him into the sea. The infection spread from ship to ship, and involved officers as well as common sailors. They finally lost all sense of subordination, and addressed their commander in an insolent manner, demanding to be conducted immediately back to Spain, or, they assured him, they would seek their own safety by taking away his life. Columbus, whose sagacity and penetration had discovered every symptom of the disorder, was prepared for this last stage of it, and was sufficiently apprised of the danger that awaited him. He found it vain to contend with passions he could no longer controul. He therefore proposed that they should obey his orders for three days longer; and, should they not discover land in that time, he would then direct his course for Spain. They complied with his proposal; and, happily for mankind, in three days they discovered land. This was a small island, to  
which

dron of seventeen ships of considerable burthen. Volunteers of all ranks and conditions solicited to be employed in this expedition. He carried over fifteen hundred persons, together with all the necessaries for establishing a colony and extending his discoveries. In this voyage he explored most of the West-India Islands; but, on his arrival at Hispaniola, he found that the garrison he had left there had been totally destroyed by the natives, and the fort demolished. He however proceeded in the planting of his colony; and, by his prudent and humane conduct towards the natives, he effectually established the Spanish authority in that island. But while he was thus laying the foundation of their future grandeur in South America, some discontented persons, who had returned to Spain, together with his former enemies in that kingdom, conspired to accomplish his ruin.

THEY represented his conduct in such a light at court, as to create uneasiness and distrust in the jealous mind of Ferdinand, and made it necessary for Columbus again to return to Spain, in order to counteract their machinations, and to obtain such farther supplies as were necessary to his great political and benevolent purposes. On his arriving at court, and stating with his usual dignity and confidence the whole history of his transactions abroad,

every

every thing wore a favourable appearance. He was received with usual honours, and solicited to take charge of another squadron, to carry out farther supplies, to pursue his discoveries, and in every respect to use his discretion in extending the Spanish empire in the new world. In this third voyage he discovered the continent of America at the mouth of the river Oronoque. He rectified many disorders in his government of Hispaniola, which had happened in his absence; and every thing was going on in a prosperous train, when an event was announced to him, which completed his own ruin, and gave a fatal turn to the Spanish policy and conduct in America. This was the arrival of Francis de Bovadilla, with a commission to supercede Columbus in his government; and with power to arraign him as a criminal, and to judge of his former administration.

It seems that by this time the enemies of Columbus, despairing to complete his overthrow by groundless insinuations of mal-conduct, had taken the more effectual method of exciting the jealousy of their sovereigns. From the promising samples of gold and other valuable commodities brought from America, they took occasion to represent to the king and queen, that the prodigious wealth and extent of the countries he had discovered would  
soon



soon throw such power into the hands of the viceroy, that he would trample on the royal authority, and bid defiance to the Spanish power. These arguments were well calculated for the cold and suspicious temper of Ferdinand, and they must have had some effect upon the mind of Isabella. The consequence was the appointment of Bovadilla, who had been the inveterate enemy of Columbus, to take the government from his hands. This first tyrant of the Spanish nation in America began his administration by ordering Columbus to be put in chains on board of a ship, and sending him prisoner to Spain. By relaxing all discipline, he introduced disorder and licentiousness throughout the colony. He subjected the unhappy natives to a most miserable servitude, and apportioned them out in large numbers among his adherents. Under this severe treatment perished, in a short time, many thousands of those innocent people.

COLUMBUS was carried in his fetters to the Spanish court, where the king and queen either feigned or felt a sufficient regret at the conduct of Bovadilla towards this illustrious prisoner. He was not only released from confinement, but treated with all imaginable respect. But, although the king endeavoured to expiate the offence by censuring and recalling Bovadilla, yet we may judge of his

his sincerity, from his appointing Nicholas de Ovando, another bitter enemy of Columbus, to succeed in the government, and from his ever after refusing to reinstate Columbus, or to fulfil any of the conditions on which the discoveries were undertaken. After two years of solicitation for this or some other employment, he at length obtained a squadron of four small vessels to attempt new discoveries. He now set out, with the ardour and enthusiasm of a young adventurer, in quest of what was always his favourite object, a passage into the South Sea, by which he might sail to India. He touched at Hispaniola, where Ovando, the governor, refused him admittance on shore, even to take shelter during a hurricane, the prognostics of which his experience had taught him to discern. By putting into a small creek, he rode out the storm, and then bore away for the continent. He spent several months, in the most boisterous season of the year, in exploring the coast round the gulph of Mexico, in hopes of finding the intended navigation to India. At length he was shipwrecked, and driven ashore on the island of Jamaica.

His cup of calamities seemed now completely full. He was cast upon an island of savages, without provisions, without any vessel, and thirty leagues from any Spanish settlement. But the greatest physical misfortunes are capable of being imbit-

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tered

tered by the insults of our fellow-creatures. A few of his hardy companions generously offered, in two Indian canoes, to attempt a voyage to Hispaniola, in hopes of obtaining a vessel for the relief of the unhappy crew. After suffering every extremity of danger and hardship, they arrived at the Spanish colony in ten days. Ovando, through personal malice and jealousy of Columbus, after having detained these messengers eight months, dispatched a vessel to Jamaica, in order to spy out the condition of Columbus and his crew, with positive instructions to the captain not to afford them any relief. This order was punctually executed. The captain approached the shore, delivered a letter of empty compliment from Ovando to the admiral, received his answer, and returned. About four months afterwards a vessel came to their relief; and Columbus, worn out with fatigues and broken with misfortunes, returned for the last time to Spain. Here a new distress awaited him, which he considered as one of the greatest he had suffered in his whole life: this was the death of queen Isabella, his last and greatest friend.

HE did not suddenly abandon himself to despair. He called upon the gratitude and justice of the king; and, in terms of dignity, demanded the fulfilment of his former contract. Notwithstanding his age and infirmities, he even solicited to be farther employed

employed in extending the career of discovery, without a prospect of any other reward but the consciousness of doing good to mankind. But Ferdinand, cold, ungrateful, and timid, dared not to comply with a single proposal of this kind, lest he should increase his own obligations to a man, whose services he thought it dangerous to reward. He therefore delayed and avoided any decision on these subjects, in hopes that the declining health of Columbus would soon rid the court of the remonstrances of a man, whose extraordinary merit was, in their opinion, a sufficient reason for destroying him. In this they were not disappointed. Columbus languished a short time, and gladly resigned a life, which had been worn out in the most essential services, perhaps, that were ever rendered, by any one man, to an ungrateful world.

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SOME time in this gloomy interval, before his death, this Vision is supposed to have been presented to him ; in order to satisfy his benevolent mind, by unfolding to him the importance of his discoveries, in their extensive influence upon the interest and happiness of mankind, in the progress of society.

THE author has indulged a small anachronism in the opening of the poem, for the sake of grouping the misfortunes of the hero ; as the time of his real

imprisonment was previous to his last voyage and to the death of Isabella.

THE author, at first, formed an idea of attempting a regular epic poem, on the discovery of America. But on examining the nature of that event, he found that the most brilliant subjects incident to such a plan would arise from the *consequences* of the discovery, and must be represented in vision. Indeed to have made it a patriotic poem, by extending the subject to the settlement and revolutions of North America, and their probable effect upon the future progress of society at large, would have protracted the vision to such a degree as to render it disproportionate to the rest of the work. To avoid an absurdity of this kind, which he supposed the critics would not pardon, he rejected the idea of a regular epic form, and has confined his plan to the train of events which might be represented to the hero in vision. This form he considers as the best that the nature of the subject would admit; and the regularity of the parts will appear by observing, that there is a single poetical design constantly kept in view, which is, to gratify and soothe the desponding mind of the hero: it being the greatest possible reward of his services, and the only one that his situation would permit him to enjoy, to convince him that his labours had not been bestowed in vain, and that he was the author of such extensive happiness to the human race.

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THE  
1  
VISION OF COLUMBUS.

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BOOK I.

## A R G U M E N T.

*Condition and soliloquy of Columbus. Appearance and speech of the Angel. They ascend the Mount of Vision, supposed to be on the western coast of Spain. Continent of America draws into view, and is described by the mountains, rivers, lakes, soil, temperature, and some of the natural productions.*

## THE

## VISION OF COLUMBUS

## BOOK I.

**L**ONG had the Sage, the first who dar'd to brave  
 The unknown dangers of the western wave,  
 Who taught mankind where future empires lay  
 In these fair confines of descending day,  
 With cares o'erwhelm'd, in life's distressing gloom, 5  
 Wish'd from a thankless world a peaceful tomb ;  
 While kings and nations, envious of his name,  
 Enjoy'd his labours and usurp'd his fame,  
 And gave the chief, from promis'd empire hurl'd,  
 Chains for a crown, a prison for a world. 10  
 Now night and silence held their lonely reign,  
 The half-orb'd moon declining to the main ;  
 Descending clouds, o'er varying ether driven,  
 Obscur'd the stars and shut the eye from heaven ;  
 Cold mists through op'ning grates the cell invade, 15  
 And deathlike terror rent the midnight shade ;  
 When from a visionary, short repose,  
 That rais'd new cares and temper'd keener woes,



Columbus woke, and to the walls address'd

The deep-felt sorrows of his manly breast. 20

Here lies the purchase, here the wretched spoil,  
Of painful years and persevering toil.

For these dread walks, this hideous haunt of pain,  
I trac'd new regions o'er the pathless main,

Dar'd all the dangers of the dreary wave, 25

Hung o'er its clefts and topp'd the furling grave,  
Saw billowy seas in swelling mountains roll,

And bursting thunders rock the reddening pole,

Death rear his front in every dreadful form,

Gape from beneath and blacken in the storm; 30

Till, tost far onward to the skirts of day,

Where milder suns dispens'd a smiling ray,

Through brighter skies my happier sails descry'd

The golden banks that bound the western tide,

And gave th'admiring world that bounteous shore 35

Their wealth to nations and to kings their power.

Oh land of wonders ! dear, delusive coast,

To these fond aged eyes for ever lost !

No more thy flowery vales I travel o'er,

For me thy mountains rear the hills no more, 40

For me thy rocks no sparkling gems unfold,

Or streams luxuriant wear their paths in gold;

From

BOOK THE FIRST.

25

From realms of promis'd peace for ever borne,  
I hail dread anguish, and in secret mourn.

But dangers past, a world explor'd in vain, 45  
And foes triumphant, shew but half my pain.  
Dissembling friends, each earlier joy who gave,  
And fir'd my youth the storms of fate to brave,  
Swarm'd in the sunshine of my happier days,  
Pursu'd the fortune and partook the praise, 50  
Bore in my doubtful cause a two-fold part,  
The garb of friendship and the viper's heart,  
Now pass my cell with smiles of sour disdain,  
Insult my woes and triumph in my pain.

One gentle guardian Heav'n indulgent gave, 55  
And now that guardian slumbers in the grave.  
Hear from above, thou dear departed Shade,\*  
As once my joys, my present sorrows aid,  
Burst my full heart, afford that last relief,  
Breathe back my sighs and reinspire my grief; 60  
Still in my fight thy royal form appears,  
Reproves my silence and demands my tears.  
On that blest hour my soul delights to dwell,  
When thy protection bade the canvass swell;

\* The death of queen Isabella, which happened previous to the last return of Columbus from America, was his most bitter subject of regret; as in her he lost his only friend.

When

When kings and courtiers found their factions vain, 65  
 Blind Superstition shrunk beneath her chain,  
 The sun's glad beam led on the circling way,  
 And isles rose beauteous in the western day.  
 But o'er those silv'ry shores, that new domain,  
 What crouds of tyrants fix their horrid reign! 70  
 Again bold Freedom seeks her kindred skies,  
 Truth leaves the world, and Isabella dies.

Oh, lend thy friendly shroud to veil my fight,  
 That these pain'd eyes may dread no more the light,  
 These welcome shades shall close my instant doom, 75  
 And this drear mansion moulder to a tomb.

Thus mourn'd the hapless man, a thundering sound  
 Roll'd round the shuddering walls and shook the ground;  
 O'er all the dome, where solemn arches bend,  
 The roofs unfold and streams of light descend; 80  
 The growing splendor fill'd th'astonish'd room,  
 And gales ethereal breath'd a glad perfume;  
 Mild in the midst a radiant seraph shone,  
 Rob'd in the vestments of the rising sun;  
 Tall rose his stature, youth's primeval grace 85  
 Adorn'd his limbs and brighten'd in his face,  
 His closing wings, in golden plumage drest,  
 With gentle sweep came folding o'er his breast,

His

His locks in rolling ringlets glittering hung,  
And sounds melodious mov'd his heav'nly tongue : 90

Rise, trembling Chief, to scenes of rapture, rise,  
This voice awaits thee from th'approving skies ;  
Thy just complaints, in God's own presence known,  
Have call'd compassion from his bounteous throne ;  
Assume no more the deep desponding strain, 95

Nor count thy toils, nor deem thy virtues vain.  
Tho' faithless men thy injur'd worth despise,  
'Tis thus they treat the blessings of the skies ;  
For look thro' nature, Heav'n's own conduct trace,  
What power divine sustains th'unthankful race ! 100

From that great source, that life-inspiring soul,  
Suns drew their light and systems learn'd to roll,  
Time walk'd the silent round, and life began,  
And God's fair image stamp'd the mind of man ;  
His cares, his bounties fill the realms of space, 105

And shine superior in thy favour'd race ;  
Men speak their wants, th'all-bounteous hand supplies,  
And gives the good that mortals dare despise.

In these dark vales where blinded faction sways,  
Wealth, pride and conquest claim the palm of praise, 110  
Aw'd into slaves, while grov'ling millions groan,  
And blood-stain'd steps lead upwards to a throne.

Far

28 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

Far other wreaths thy virtuous temples claim,  
 Far nobler honours build thy sacred name ;  
 Be thine the joys immortal minds that grace, 115  
 And thine the toils that blefs a kindred race.  
 Now raife thy ravish'd foul to scenes more bright,  
 The vision'd ages rifing on thy fight ;  
 For, wing'd with speed, from worlds of light I came,  
 To footh thy grief and show thy diftant fame. 120

As that great Seer, whose animating rod  
 Taught Israel's fons the wonder-working God,  
 Who led, thro' dreary wafes, the murm'ring band  
 To the rich confines of the promis'd land,  
 Opprefs'd with years, from Pisgah's beauteous height, 125  
 O'er boundless regions caft the raptur'd fight ;  
 The blifs of unborn nations warm'd his breast,  
 Repaid his toils and footh'd his foul to reft ;  
 Thus, o'er thy fubject wave, fhalt thou behold  
 Far happier realms their future charms unfold, 130  
 In nobler pomp another Pisgah rife,  
 Beneath whose foot thy new-found Canaan lies ;  
 There, rapt in vifion, hail the diftant clime,  
 And taste the bleffings of remotest time.

The Seraph spoke ; and now before them lay 135  
 (The doors unbarr'd) a fteep afcending way,  
 That,

That, through disparting shades, arose on high,  
 Reach'd o'er the hills, and lengthen'd up the sky,  
 Show'd a clear summit, rich with rising flowers,  
 That breathe their odours through celestial bowers; 140  
 O'er proud Hispanian spires, it looks sublime,  
 Subjects the Alps and levels all the clime.  
 Led by the Power, Columbus gain'd the height,  
 A touch from heav'n sublim'd his mortal fight,  
 And, calm beneath them, flow'd the western main, 145  
 Far stretch'd, immense, a sky-encircled plain;  
 No sail, no isle, no cloud invests the bound,  
 Nor billowy surge disturbs th'unvaried round;  
 Till, deep in distant heav'ns, the sun's dim ray  
 Topp'd unknown cliffs and call'd them up to day; 150  
 Slow glimmering into sight wide regions drew,  
 And rose and brighten'd on th'expanding view;  
 Fair sweep the waves, the lessening ocean smiles,  
 And breathes the fragrance of a thousand isles;  
 Near and more near the long-drawn coasts arise, 155  
 Bays stretch their arms and mountains lift the skies,  
 The lakes, unfolding, point the streams their way,  
 The plains, the hills, their spreading skirts display,  
 The vales draw forth, high walk th'approaching groves,  
 And all the majesty of nature moves. 160

O'er

O'er the wild climes his eyes delighted rove,  
 Where lands extend and glittering waters move;  
 He saw, through central realms, the winding shore  
 Spread the deep Gulph, his sail had trac'd before,  
 The Darien isthmus meet the raging tide, 165  
 Join distant lands and neighb'ring seas divide,  
 On either side the shores unbounded bend,  
 Push wide their waves, and to the poles ascend;  
 While two great continents united rise,  
 Broad as the main and lengthen'd with the skies. 170  
 Silent the Hero gaz'd; when thus the Guide:  
 Here spreads the world, thy daring sail descry'd,  
 Ages unborn shall bless the happy day,  
 That saw thy streamers shape the trackless way,  
 While through the growing realms thy sons shall tread, 175  
 And following millions trace the path you led.  
 Behold yon isles, where first thy flag unfurl'd,  
 Wav'd peaceful triumph o'er the western world,  
 Where, aw'd to silence, savage bands gave place,  
 And hail'd with joy the sun-descended race! \* 180

\* The original inhabitants of Hispaniola were worshippers  
 of the sun. On the first landing of the Europeans, they were  
 supposed to be gods, and consequently descended from the sun.

See there the banks that purest waters lave,  
 Swift Oronoque rolls back the ocean's wave,  
 The well-known current cleaves the lofty coast,  
 Where Paria's walks thy former footsteps boast !  
 These scanty shores no more thy joys shall bound, 185  
 See nobler prospects lead their swelling round,  
 Nature's sublimest scenes before thee roll,  
 And years and empires open on thy fowl !

High to yon seats exalt thy roving view,  
 Where Quito's lofty plains o'erlook Peru, 190  
 On whose broad base, like clouds together driven,  
 A world exalted props the skirts of heaven.  
 From south to north, what long blue fronts arise !  
 Ridge over ridge, and loft in ambient skies !  
 Approaching near, they heave expanding bounds, 195  
 The yielding concave bends sublimer rounds,  
 Earth's loftiest towers there lift the daring height,  
 And all the Andes fill the bounded fight.

Round the low base what sloping breaches bend !  
 Hills form on hills, and trees o'er trees extend, 200  
 Ascending, whitening, how the crags are loft !  
 O'erwhelm'd with fummits of eternal frost ;  
 Broad fields of ice give back the morning ray,  
 Like walls of suns, or heav'n's perennial day.

There



32 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

There folding storms on eastern pinions ride, 205  
 Veil the black heav'n, and wrap the mountain's side,  
 The thunders rake the crags, the rains descend,  
 And the long light'nings o'er the vallies bend,  
 While blasts unburden'd sweep the cliffs of snow,  
 The whirlwinds wheel above, the floods convolve below. 210  
 There molten rocks, explosive rend their tomb,  
 And dread volcanoes ope the nations' doom,  
 Wild o'er the regions pour the floods of fire,  
 The shores heave backward and the seas retire.  
 There slumbering vengeance waits th'Almighty's call, 215  
 Long ages hence to shake some guilty wall;  
 Thy pride, O Lima, swells the sulph'rous wave,  
 And fanes, and priests, and idols crowd thy grave.  
 But cease, my son, these dread events to trace,  
 Nor learn the woes that wait thy kindred race. 220  
 Beyond those glimmering hills, in lands unknown,  
 O'er the wide gulph, beyond the flaming zone,  
 Thro' milder climes, see gentler mountains rise,  
 Where yon dim regions bound the northern skies.  
 Back from the shore ascending champaigns run, 225  
 And lift their heights to hail the eastern sun,  
 Through all the midland realm, to yon blue pole,  
 The green hills lengthen and the rivers roll.

So

See there the banks that purest waters lave,  
 Swift Oronoque rolls back the ocean's wave,  
 The well-known current cleaves the lofty coast,  
 Where Paria's walks thy former footsteps boast !  
 These scanty shores no more thy joys shall bound, 185  
 See nobler prospects lead their swelling round,  
 Nature's sublimest scenes before thee roll,  
 And years and empires open on thy soul !

High to yon seats exalt thy roving view,  
 Where Quito's lofty plains o'erlook Peru, 190  
 On whose broad base, like clouds together driven,  
 A world exalted props the skirts of heaven.  
 From south to north, what long blue fronts arise !  
 Ridge over ridge, and loft in ambient skies !  
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 The yielding concave bends sublimer rounds,  
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 And all the Andes fill the bounded sight.

Round the low base what sloping breaches bend !  
 Hills form on hills, and trees o'er trees extend, 200  
 Ascending, whitening, how the crags are loft !  
 O'erwhelm'd with summits of eternal frost ;  
 Broad fields of ice give back the morning ray,  
 Like walls of suns, or heav'n's perennial day.

There

34 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

What treasur'd stores the lofty hills combine !  
 Sleep there ye diamonds, and ye ores refine,  
 Exalt your heads, ye oaks, ye pines, ascend,  
 Till future navies bid your branches bend,  
 Then spread the canvass o'er the watery way,  
 Explore new worlds and teach the old your fway.

He said, and northward cast his wondering eyes,  
 Where other cliffs, in other climes, arise,  
 Where bleak Acadia spreads the dangerous coast,  
 And isles and shoals their latent horrors boast,  
 High in the distant heav'n, the hoary height  
 Heaves the glad sailer an eternal light.\*  
 Nor could those hills, unmotic'd, raise their head,  
 That look sublime o'er Hudfon's winding bed ;  
 Tho' no bold fiction rear them to the skies,  
 Tho' neighb'ring summits far superior rise ;  
 Yet the blue Kaatskill, where the storms divide,  
 Would lift the heav'ns from Atlas' lab'ring pride.

Awhile the ridgy heights his notice claim,  
 And hills unnumber'd rose without a name,  
 Which plac'd, in pomp, on any eastern shore,  
 Taurus would shrink, the Alps be fung no more ;

\* The White Hills of Nova Scotia, though fifty miles from the sea, are the first land to be discovered in approaching part of North America, and serve as a land mark for a considerable length of coast, of very difficult navigation.

For here great Nature, more exalted show'd 275  
The last ascending footsteps of her God.

He saw those mountains ope their watery store,  
Floods leave their caves, thro' hills disparting pour,  
Cleave the wide plains and seek the distant strand,  
And lave their beauteous banks, where future towns  
must stand. 280

First, from the dreadful Andes' opening side,  
He saw Maranon \* lead his sovereign tide,  
A thousand hills for him dissolve their snow,  
A thousand streams obedient bend below,

\* This river, from different circumstances, has obtained several different names. It has been called *Amazon*, from an idea that some part of the neighbouring country was inhabited by a race of warlike women, resembling what Herodotus relates of the Amazons of Scythia. It has been called *Orellana*, from its having been discovered by a Spanish officer of that name, who, on a certain expedition, deserted from the younger Pizarro, on one of the sources of this river, and navigated it from thence to the ocean. *Maranon* is the original name given it by the natives of the country; which name I choose to follow.

If we estimate its magnitude by the length of its course, and the quantity of its water, it is much the greatest river that has hitherto come to our knowledge. Its navigation is said to be uninterrupted for four thousand miles from the sea, its breadth, within the banks, is sixty geographical miles; it receives in its course a variety of great rivers, besides those described in the succeeding paragraphs of the text. Many of these descend from elevated countries and mountains covered with snow, the melting of which annually swells the Maranon above its banks; when it overflows and fertilizes a vast extent of territory.

36 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

From different climes their devious courses wind, 285  
Sweep beds of ore and leave their gold behind,  
In headlong ~~cataracts~~ indignant heave,  
Rush to his opening banks and swell the sweeping wave.

Ucayla, chief of all his mighty sons,  
From Cusco's heights a boundless journey runs ; 290  
Yutay moves gently in a shorter course,  
And rapid Yatva pours a gathering force ;  
Far in a wild, by nameless tributes fed,  
The silent Chavar wears a lonely bed ;  
Aloft, where northern Quito sits on high, 295  
The roaring Napo quits his misty sky ;  
Down the long steep, in whitening torrents driven,  
Like Nile descending from his fabled heaven.

While other waves and lakes unknown to fame,  
Discharge their urns and fill the swelling stream, 300  
That, far, from clime to clime, majestic goes,  
Enlarging, widening, deepening as it flows ;  
Approaching ocean hears the distant roar,  
Moves up its bed, nor finds th' expected shore ;  
His freshening waves, with high and hoary tide, 305  
Whelm back the flood, and isles and champaigns hide,  
Till mingling waters lead the downward sweep,  
And waves, and trees, and banks roll whirling to the deep.

Now,

Now, where the sun in milder glory beams,  
 Brazilia's hills pour down their spreading streams, 310  
 The smiling lakes their opening fides display,  
 And winding vales prolong the devious way ;  
 He saw Xaraya's \* diamond banks unfold,  
 And Paraguay's deep channel pav'd with gold,  
 Saw proud Potosi lift his glittering head, 315  
 Whence the clear Plata wears his tinctur'd bed ;  
 Rich with the spoils of many a distant mine,  
 In one broad silver sea their floods combine ;  
 Wide o'er the realms its annual bounties spread,  
 By nameless streams from various mountains fed ; 320  
 The thirsty regions wait its glad return,  
 And drink their future harvests from its urn.  
 Round the cold climes, beneath the southern sky,  
 Thy path, Magellan, caught the Hero's eye ;  
 The long cleft ridges wall'd the spreading way, 325  
 Fair gleaming westward to the placid sea.

\* Some of the richest diamond mines are found on the banks of the lake *Xaraya*. The river *Paraguay* is remarkable for the quantities of gold dust found in its channel. The *Rio de la Plata*, properly so called, has its source in the mountains of Potosi; and it is probably from this circumstance, that it received its name, which signifies the *River of Silver*. This river, after being joined by the Paraguay, which is larger than itself, retains its own name till it joins the sea. Near the mouth, it is ninety miles wide; but it is in other respects far inferior to the Marañon.

38 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

Soon as the distant wave was seen to roll,  
 His ancient wishes \* fill'd his rising soul,  
 Warm from his heaving heart an anxious sigh  
 Breath'd o'er his lips; he turn'd his moisten'd eye, 330  
 And thus besought the angel: Speak, my guide,  
 Where leads the pass? and whence yon purple tide?  
 How the dim waves in blending ether stray,  
 No lands behind them rise, no streamers in their play!  
 In those low skies extends the boundless main, 335  
 I fought so long, and fought, alas, in vain.  
 Restore, celestial Power, my youthful morn,  
 Call back my years, and bid my fame return;  
 Grant me to trace, beyond that pathless sea,  
 Some happier shore from lust of empire free; 340  
 In that far world to fix a peaceful bower,  
 From envy safe, and curst Ovando's power.  
 Earth's happiest realms, let not their distance hide,  
 Nor seas for ever roll their useless tide.  
 Bid unborn nations burst the womb of time, 345  
 And rise to birth in that indulgent clime;

\* The great object of Columbus in most of his voyages was to discover a western passage to India. For this purpose he navigated the gulph of Mexico, with great care, and was much disappointed in not finding a pass into the South Sea. The view he is here supposed to have of that ocean would therefore naturally recall his former desire of sailing round the world.

And

And grant me still, this final task to dare,  
One vent'rous bark, and be my life thy care.

The Hero spoke; the seraph mild replies,  
While warm compaffion soften'd in his eyes: 350

Though still to virtuous deeds thy mind aspires,  
And heav'nly visions kindle new desires;  
Yet hear with reverence what attends thy state,  
Nor wish to pass th' eternal bounds of fate.

Led by this sacred light thy soul shall see, 355

That half mankind shall owe their bliss to thee,

And joyous empires claim their future birth,

In these fair bounds of sea-encircled earth;

While unborn times, by thine example prest,

Shall call forth heroes to explore the rest. 360

Beyond those seas, the well-known climes arise,  
Where morning splendors gild the Indian skies.

The circling course to Madagascar's shores,

Round Afric's cape, bold Gama now explores;

Another pass these opening straits provide, 365

Nor long shall rest the daring search untry'd;

This watery glade shall open soon to fame,

Here a lost hero fix his lasting name,\*

\* The Straits of Magellan; so called from having been discovered by that navigator, who first attempted to go round the world, and lost his life in the attempt.



40 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

From that new main in furious waves be tost,  
And fall neglected on the barb'rous coast. 370

But see the chief from Albion's strand arise,  
Speed in his pinions, fame before his eyes !  
Hither, O Drake, display the hastening sails,  
Widen ye paffes, and awake ye gales,  
Move thou before him, heav'n-revolving fun, 375  
Wind his long course, and teach him where to run,  
Earth's distant shores, in circling bands unite,  
Lands, learn your fame, and oceans, roll in light,  
Round all the beauteous globe his flag be hurl'd,  
A new Columbus to th'astonish'd world ! 380

He spoke ; and silent tow'rd the northern sky,  
Wide o'er the realms the Hero cast his eye ;  
Saw the long floods thro' devious channels pour,  
And wind their currents to the opening shore ;  
While midland seas and lonely lakes display 385  
Their glittering glories to the beams of day.  
Thy capes, Virginia, towering from the tide,  
Rais'd their blue banks, and stretch'd their borders wide ;  
To future sails unfold a circling way,  
And guard the bosom of thy beauteous Bay. 390

Where, from each, distant Alleghanian height,  
Thy spreading streams lay glimmering to the light ;

York

York led his wave, imbank'd in flowery pride,  
 And nobler James fell winding by his side ;  
 Back tow'rd the hills, through many a silent vale, 395  
 Wild Rappahanock seem'd to lure the sail,  
 While, far o'er all, in sea-like azure spread,  
 The great Potowmac swept his lordly bed.

When thus he saw the mingling waters play,  
 And seas, in loft disorder, idly stray, 400  
 The frowning forests stretch the dusky wing,  
 And deadly damps forbid the fruits to spring,  
 No seasons clothe the field with beauteous grain,  
 No buoyant ship attempt the useless main,  
 With fond impatience, heav'nly fear, he cry'd, 405  
 When shall my children cross the lonely tide ?  
 Here, here, my sons, the hand of culture bring,  
 Here teach the lawns to smile, the groves to sing ;  
 Ye sacred floods, no longer vainly glide,  
 Ye harvests, load them, and ye forests, ride, 410  
 Bear the deep burden from the joyous swain,  
 And tell the world where peace and plenty reign.

Now round the coast, where other floods invite,  
 He fondly turn'd ; they fill'd his eager sight :  
 Here Del'ware's waves the yielding shores divide, 415  
 And here majestic Hudson pours his tide ;  
 Thy

42 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

Thy parent stream, fair Hartford, met his eye,  
 Far lessening upward to the northern sky;  
 No watery glades thro' richer valleys shine,  
 Nor drinks the sea a lovelier wave than thine. 420  
 Mystick and Charles adorn'd their bloomy isles,  
 And gay Piscat'way caught his passing smiles;  
 Swift Kenebeck, descending from on high,  
 Swept the tall hills and lengthen'd down the sky;  
 When hoarse resounding through the gaping shore, 425  
 He heard cold Laurence' dreadful furies roar.  
 Tho' softening May had wak'd the vernal blade,  
 And happier climes her fragrant garb display'd,  
 Yet howling winter, in this bleak domain,  
 Shook the wide waste, and held his gloomy reign; 430  
 Still groans the flood, in frozen fetters bound,  
 And isles of ice his angry front furround;  
 Cloth'd in white majesty, the foaming main  
 Leads up the tide and tempts the wintery chain,  
 Billows on billows lift the maddening brine, 435  
 And seas and clouds in battling conflict join,  
 The dash'd wave struggling heaves in swelling sweep,  
 Wide crash the portals of the frozen deep;  
 Till, forc'd aloft, high-bounding in the air,  
 Moves the bleak ice and sheds a hideous glare, 440

The

The torn foundations on the surface ride,  
And wrecks of winter load the downward tide.

Now where the lakes, those midland oceans lie,  
Columbus turn'd his heav'n-illumin'd eye.  
Ontario's banks, unfolding on the north, 445  
With sweep majestic, pour'd his Laurence forth ;  
Above, bold Erie's wave sublimely flood,  
Look'd o'er the cliff \* and heav'd his headlong flood ;  
Far circling in the north, great Huron spread,  
And Michigan o'erwhelm'd a western bed ; 450  
While, stretch'd in circling majesty away,  
The deep Superior clos'd the setting day.  
Wide opening round them, lands delightful spread,  
Deep groves innumerable cast a solemn shade ;  
Slow mov'd the settling mist in lurid streams, 455  
And dusky radiance brown'd the solar beams ;  
O'er all the scene the great discoverer stood,  
And thus address'd the messenger of good :  
But why these seats, that seem reserv'd to grace  
The virtuous toils of some illustrious race, 460  
Why spread so wide, and form'd so fair in vain ?  
And why so distant rolls th'unconscious main ?  
These desert fountains must for ever rest,  
Of man unseen, by native beasts possess.

\* The falls of Niagara.

44 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

For, see ! no ship can point the canvass here, 465  
 No stream conducts, nor ocean wanders near,  
 Eternal winter clothes the shelvy shores,  
 Where yon far northern \* son of Neptune roars ;  
 Or should bold barks his frozen entrance brave,  
 And climes by culture warm his lessening wave, 470  
 Yon frightful Cataract exhals the brow,  
 And frowns defiance to the world below.  
 To whom the Seraph. Here extended lies  
 The happiest realm that feels the fostering skies ;  
 Led by this arm thy sons shall hither come, 475  
 And streams obedient yield the heroes room ;  
 Nor think no pass can find the distant main,  
 Or heav'n's last polish touch'd these climes in vain.  
 See the bold Mississippi bend his way  
 Thro' all the western boundless tracts of day ; 480  
 From lonely lakes behold his current led,  
 And silent waves adorn his infant head ;  
 Far south thro' happy regions see him wind,  
 By gathering floods and nobler fountains join'd,  
 Yon opening gulph receive the beauteous wave, 485  
 And thy known isles his fresh'ning current lave.  
 To his broad bed their tributary stores,  
 Akanfa here, and there Missouri pours,

\* St. Laurence.

Rouge, from the western wild, his channel fills,  
 Ohio, gather'd from a thousand hills, 490  
 The Black, the Yazoes fed by Georgian springs,  
 And Illinois his northern tribute brings;—  
 There lies the path thy future sons shall trace,  
 And spread o'er these wide realms the glory of thy race.

So taught the Saint. The regions nearer drew, 495  
 And other objects claim'd the Hero's view.  
 Retiring far round Hudson's frozen bay,  
 Where lessening circles shrink beyond the day,  
 The shivering shrubs scarce brave the dismal clime,  
 Snows ever-rising with the years of time; 500  
 The beasts all whitening roam the lifeless plain,  
 And caves unfrequent scoop the couch for man.

Where spring's coy steps, in cold Canadia, stray,  
 And joyless seasons hold unequal sway,  
 He saw the pine its daring mantle rear, 505  
 Break the rude blast and mock th'inclement year,  
 Secure the limits of the angry skies,  
 And bid all southern vegetation rise.  
 Wild o'er the vast impenetrable round,  
 The untrod bow'rs of shadowy nature frown'd; 510  
 The neighb'ring cedar wav'd its honours wide,  
 The fir's tall boughs, the oak's resistless pride,

The

46 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

The branching beech, the aspen's trembling shade,  
 Veil'd the dim heav'ns and brown'd the dusky glade.  
 Here in huge crouds those sturdy sons of earth, 515  
 In frosty regions, claim a nobler birth ;  
 Where heavy trunks the shelt'ring dome requires,  
 And copious fuel feeds the wint'ry fires.  
 While warmer suns that southern climes emblaze,  
 A cool deep umbrage o'er the woodland raise ; 520  
 Florida's shores their blooms around him spread,  
 And Georgian hills erect their shady head.  
 Beneath tall trees, in livelier verdure gay,  
 Long level walks a humble garb display ;  
 The infant maize unconscious of its worth, 525  
 Points the green spire and bends the foliage forth ;  
 Sweeten'd on flowery banks, the passing air  
 Breathes all th'untasted fragrance of the year ;  
 Unbidden harvests o'er the regions rise,  
 And blooming life repays the genial skies. 530  
 Where circling shores around the gulph extend,  
 The bounteous groves with richer burdens bend ;  
 Spontaneous fruits th'uplifted palms unfold,  
 The beauteous orange waves a load of gold,  
 The untaught vine, the wildly-wanton cane 535  
 Bloom on the waste, and clothe th'ensavour'd plain ;  
 The

BOOK THE FIRST.

47

The rich pimento scents the neighbouring skies,  
And woolly clusters o'er the cotton rise.  
Here, in one view, the same glad branches bring  
The fruits of autumn and the flowers of spring; 540  
No wint'ry blasts th'unchanging year deform,  
Nor beasts unshelter'd fear the pinching storm;  
But vernal breezes o'er the blossoms rove,  
And breathe the ripen'd juices thro' the grove.  
Beneath the crystal wave's inconstant light, 545  
Pearl's undistinguish'd sparkle on the fight;  
From opening earth, in living lustre, shine  
The various treasures of the blazing mine;  
Hills, cleft before him, all their stores unfold,  
The quick mercurius and the burning gold; 550  
While gems of various hues, in bright array,  
Illume the changing rocks and shed the beams of day.

THE





THE  
VISION OF COLUMBUS.

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BOOK II.

D

## ARGUMENT.

*Natives of America appear in vision. Their manners and characters. Columbus enquires the cause of the dissimilarity of nations. The Angel replies—That the human body is composed of a due proportion of the elements suited to the place of its first creation—that these elements, differently proportioned, produce all the changes of health, sickness, growth, and decay; and will likewise produce any other changes which occasion the diversity of men—that these elemental proportions are varied, not more by climate, than temperature, and many other local accidents—that the mind is likewise in a state of change, and will take its physical character from the body and from external objects: examples. Enquiry and answer concerning the first peopling of America. View of Mexico. Its destruction by Cortez. View of Cusco and Quito, cities of Peru. Tradition of Capac and Oella, founders of the Peruvian empire. Columbus enquires into their real history. The angel gives an account of their origin, and relates the stratagems they used in establishing that empire.*

T H E  
V I S I O N   O F   C O L U M B U S.

B O O K   I I.

**H**IGH o'er the scene, as thus Columbus gaz'd,  
Th' indulgent Power his arm sublimely rais'd ;  
When round the realms superior lustre flew,  
And call'd new wonders to the Hero's view.

He saw, at once, as far as eye could rove, 5  
Like scattering herds, the swarthy people move,  
In tribes innumerable ; all the waste,  
Beneath their steps, a varying shadow cast.  
As airy shapes, beneath the moon's pale eye,  
When broken clouds sail o'er the curtain'd sky, 10  
Spread thro' the grove and flit along the glade,  
And cast their grisly phantoms through the shade ;  
So move the hordes, in thickets half conceal'd,  
Or vagrant stalking o'er the open field.  
Here ever-restless tribes, despising home, 15  
O'er shadowy streams and trackless deserts roam ;  
While others there, thro' downs and hamlets stray,  
And rising domes a happier state display.

The painted chiefs, in death's grim terrors drest,  
 Rise fierce to war, and beat the savage breast ; 20  
 Dark round their steps collecting warriors pour,  
 And dire revenge begins the hideous roar ;  
 While to the realms around the signal flies,  
 And tribes on tribes, in dread disorder, rise,  
 Track the mute foe and scour the distant wood, 25  
 Wide as a storm, and dreadful as a flood ;  
 Or deep in groves the silent ambush lay,  
 Or wing the flight or sweep the prize away,  
 Unconscious babes and reverend fires devour,  
 Drink the warm blood, and paint their cheeks with gore. 30

Awhile he gaz'd, with dubious thoughts oppress'd,  
 And thus his wavering voice the Power address'd :—  
 Say, to what class of nature's sons belong  
 The countless tribes of this untutor'd throng ?  
 Where human frames and brutal souls combine, 35  
 No force can tame them, and no arts refine.  
 Can these be fashion'd on the social plan,  
 Or boast a lineage with the race of man ?  
 In yon fair isle, \* when first my wandering view  
 Rang'd the glad coast and met the savage crew ; 40

\* The island of Hispaniola ; where Columbus planted a colony in his first voyage. See the Introduction.

A timorous herd, like harmless roes, they ran,  
 And call'd us gods, from whom their tribes began.  
 But when, their fears allay'd, in us they trace  
 The well-known image of a mortal race;—  
 When Spanish blood their wondering eyes beheld, 45  
 Returning rage their changing bosoms swell'd;  
 They rous'd their bands from numerous hills afar,  
 To feast their souls on ruin, waste and war.  
 Nor plighted vows, nor sure defeat, controul  
 The same indignant savageness of soul. 50

Tell then, my Seer, from what dire sons of earth  
 The brutal people drew their ancient birth?  
 Whether in realms, the western heav'ns that close,  
 A tribe distinct from other nations rose,  
 Born to subjection; when, in happier time, 55  
 A nobler race should hail their fruitful clime.  
 Or, if a common source all nations claim;  
 Their lineage, form, and reas'ning powers the same,  
 What sovereign cause, in secret wisdom laid,  
 This wond'rous change in God's own work has made? 60  
 Why various powers of soul and tints of face  
 In different climes diversify the race?

To whom the Guide: — Unnumber'd causes lie  
 In earth, and sea, and round the varying sky,

54 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

That fire the soul, or damp the genial flame, 65  
 And work their wonders on the human frame.  
 See beauty, form, and colour change with place—  
 Here charms of health the blooming visage grace;  
 There pale diseases float in every wind,  
 Deform the figure, and degrade the mind. 70  
 From earth's own elements, thy race at first  
 Rose into life, the children of the dust;  
 These kindred elements, by various use,  
 Nourish the growth and every change produce;  
 In each ascending stage the man sustain, 75  
 His breath, his food, his physic, and his bane.  
 In due proportions, where these virtues lie,  
 A perfect form their equal aids supply;  
 And, while unchang'd the efficient causes reign,  
 Age foll'wing age th'unvaried race maintain. 80  
 But where crude elements distemper'd rise,  
 And cast their sick'ning vapours round the skies,  
 Unlike that harmony of human frame,  
 Where God's first works and Nature's were the same,  
 Th' unconscious tribes, attemp'ring to the clime, 85  
 Still vary downward with the years of time;  
 Till fix'd, at last, their characters abide,  
 And local likeness feeds their local pride.

The

BOOK THE SECOND.

55

The soul too, varying with the changing clime,  
Feeble or fierce, or groveling or sublime, 90  
Forms with the body to a kindred plan,  
And lives the same, a nation or a man.

Yet think not clime alone the tint controuls,  
On every shore, by altitude of poles ;  
A different cast the glowing zone demands, 95  
In Paria's blooms,\* from Tombut's burning sands.  
Internal causes, thro' the earth and skies,  
Blow in the breeze or on the mountain rise,  
Thro' air and ocean, with their changes run,  
Breathe from the ground, or circle with the sun. 100

Where these long shores their boundless regions spread,  
See the same form all different tribes pervade ;  
Thro' all alike the fertile forests bloom,  
And all, uncultur'd, shed a solemn gloom ;  
Thro' all great nature's boldest features rise, 105  
Sink into vales and tower amid the skies ;  
Streams, darkly winding, stretch a broader sway,  
The groves and mountains bolder walks display ;  
A dread sublimity informs the whole,  
And wakes a dread sublimity of soul. 110

\* Paria is a country near the river Oronoque ; the only part of the continent of America that Columbus had seen. Tombut, in the same latitude, is the most sterl part of Africa.



Yet time and art shall other changes find,  
 And open still and vary still the mind.  
 The countless swarms that tread these dank abodes,  
 Who glean spontaneous fruits and range the woods,  
 Fix'd here for ages, in their swarthy face 115  
 Display the wild complexion of the place.  
 Yet when their tribes to happy nations rise,  
 And earth by culture warms\* the genial skies,

\* Without entering into any discussion on the theory of heat and cold, the author, in vindication of the expression in the text, would just observe, that some solid mass of matter, such for instance as the surface of the earth, seems absolutely necessary to the production of heat. At least it must be a matter more compact than that of the sun's rays; and perhaps its power of producing heat is in proportion to its solidity. That the warmth communicated to the atmosphere is generated by the combined causes of the earth and the sun, he is not disposed to deny; but he thinks the agency of the former much more powerful in this operation than that of the latter, and its presence more indispensable; as masses of matter will produce heat by friction, without the aid of the sun; but no experiment has yet proved that the rays of the sun are capable of producing heat, without the aid of earthy matter. The air is temperate in those cavities of the earth where the sun is the most effectually excluded; whereas, the coldest regions of which we have any knowledge are the tops of the Andes; where the sun's rays have the most direct operation, being the most verticle and the least obstructed by vapours. Those regions are too far removed from the broad surface of the earth, which is requisite to warm the surrounding atmosphere by its co-operation with the action of the sun.

From these principles we may conclude that cultivation tends to warm the atmosphere and meliorate the climate of a cold country; as by removing the forests and the marshes, the solid earth is open to the sun, and acts upon the air.

According to the descriptions given of the middle parts of Europe

A fairer tint and more majestic grace  
 Shall flush their features and exalt the race ; 120  
 While milder arts, with social joys refin'd,  
 Inspire new beauties in the growing mind.

Thy foll'wers too, fair Europe's noblest pride,  
 When future gales shall wing them o'er the tide,  
 A ruddier hue \* and deeper shade shall gain, 125  
 And stalk, in statelier figures, o'er the plain.  
 While nature's grandeur lifts the eye abroad  
 O'er these dread footsteps of the forming God,  
 Wing'd on a wider glance the vent'rous soul  
 Bids greater powers and bolder thoughts unroll ; 130  
 The sage, the chief, the patriot, unconfin'd,  
 Shield the weak world and meliorate mankind.

But think not thou, in all the range of man,  
 That different pairs, in different climes, began ;  
 Or tribes distinct, by signal marks confest, 135  
 Were born to serve or subjugate the rest.

Europe by Cæsar and Tacitus, it appears that those countries were much colder in the days of those writers, than at present ; cultivation has already softened the climate to a great degree. The same effect begins to be perceived in North America, and will doubtless one day be as apparent as the present difference in the temperature of the two continents.

\* The complexion of the inhabitants of North America, who are descended from the English and Dutch, is evidently darker, and their stature taller, than those of the English and Dutch in Europe

58 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

The Hero heard, and thus resum'd the strain:—  
 Who led these wand'ers o'er the dreary main?  
 Could their weak fires, unskill'd in human lore,  
 Build the bold bark, to seek an unknown shore ; 140  
 A shore so distant from the world beside,  
 So dark the tempests, and so wild the tide,  
 That Greece and Tyre, and all who tempt the sea,  
 Have shunn'd the task, and left the fame to me?

When first thy roving race, the Power reply'd, 145  
 Learn'd by the stars the devious sail to guide,  
 From stormy Hellespont explor'd the way,  
 And fought the bound'ries of the Midland sea;  
 Ere great Alcides form'd the impious plan  
 To check the sail, and bound the steps of man,— 150  
 Driv'n from the Calpian straits, a hapless train  
 Roll'd on the waves that sweep the western main;  
 While eastern storms the bill'wing skies o'ershade,  
 Nor sun nor stars afford their wonted aid.

For many a darksome day, o'erwhelm'd and tost, 155  
 Their sails, their oars in swell'wing surges lost ;  
 At length, the clouds withdrawn, they sad descry  
 Their course directing from their native sky ;  
 No hope remains ; while, o'er the flaming zone,  
 The wind still bears them with the circling sun ; 160

Till

Till the wild walks of this delightful coast  
 Receive to lonely seats the suffering host.  
 The fruitful plains invite their steps to roam,  
 Renounce their sorrows, and forget their home ;  
 Revolving years their ceaseless wand'rings led, 165  
 And from their sons descending nations spread.

These round the south and middle region stray,  
 Where cultur'd fields their growing arts display ;  
 While northern tribes a later source demand,  
 A race descended from the Asian strand. 170  
 Now tow'rd the distant pole thy view extend ;  
 See isles and shores and seas Pacific blend ;  
 That peopled coast, where Amur's current glides,  
 From thy own world a narrow frith divides ;  
 There Tartar hosts, for numerous years, have sail'd, 175  
 And changing tribes these fruitful regions hail'd.

He look'd : the north-west shores beneath him spread,  
 And moving nations on the margin tread.  
 As, when autumnal storms awake their force,  
 The storks foreboding tempt their southern course ; 180  
 From all the fields collecting throngs arise,  
 Mount on the wing and crowd along the skies ;  
 Thus, to his eye, from far Siberia's shore,  
 Thro' isles and seas, the gath'ring people pour ;

From

From those cold regions hail a happier strand, 185  
 Leap from the wave and tread the welcome land;  
 The growing tribes extend their southern sway,  
 And widely wander to a milder day.

But why—the Chief replied—if ages past  
 Have led these vagrants o'er the wilder'd waste— 190  
 If human souls, for social compact given,  
 Inform their nature with the stamp of heaven,  
 Why the dread glooms for ever must they rove,  
 And no mild joys their temper'd passions move?  
 Ages remote and dark thou bring'st to light, 195  
 When the first leaders dar'd the western flight.  
 On other shores, in every eastern clime,  
 Since that unletter'd, distant tract of time,  
 What arts have shone! what empires found their place!  
 What golden sceptres sway'd the human race! 200  
 What guilt and grandeur from their seats been hurl'd,  
 And dire divulsions shook the changing world!  
 Ere Rome's bold Eagle clave th'affrighted air,  
 Ere Sparta form'd her death-like sons of war,  
 Ere proud Chaldea saw her towers arise, 205  
 Or Memphian columns heav'd against the skies;  
 These tribes have stray'd beneath the fruitful zone,  
 Their souls unpolish'd, and their name unknown.

The

# BOOK THE SECOND.

61

The voice of heav'n reply'd:—A scanty train,  
 In that far age, approach'd the wide domain ; 210  
 Where fertile groves, with game and fruitage crown'd,  
 Supply'd their wishes from th'uncultur'd ground.  
 By nature form'd to rove, the restless mind,  
 Of freedom fond, will ramble unconfin'd,  
 Till all the realm is fill'd, and rival right 215  
 Refrains their steps, and bids their force unite ;  
 When common safety builds a common cause,  
 Conforms their interests and inspires their laws ;  
 By mutual checks their different manners blend,  
 Their fields bloom joyous, and their walls ascend. 220  
 Here, to their growing hosts, no bounds arose,  
 They claim'd no safeguard, as they fear'd no foes ;  
 Round all the land their scatt'ring sons must stray,  
 Ere civil arts could claim a settled sway.  
 And what a world their mazy wand'rings led ! 225  
 What streams and wilds in boundless order spread !  
 See the shores lengthen, see the rivers roll,  
 To each far main and each extended pole !  
 Yet circling years the destin'd course have run,  
 The realms are peopled and their arts begun. 230  
 Behold, where that mid region strikes the eyes,  
 A few fair cities glitter to the skies ;

There

62 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

There move, in eastern pomp, the toils of state,  
And temples heave, magnificently great.

The Hero look'd; when from the varying height, 235  
Three growing splendors, rising on the fight,  
Flam'd like a constellation: high in view,  
Ascending near, their opening glories drew;  
In equal pomp, beneath their roofs of gold,  
Three spiry towns, in blazing pride, unfold. 240  
So, led by visions of the guiding God,  
The sacred Seer\* in Patmos' waste who trod,  
Saw the dim vault of heav'n its folds unbend,  
And gates and spires and streets and domes descend;  
With golden skies, and suns and rainbows crown'd, 245  
The new-form'd city lights the world around.

Fair on the north, bright Mexico arose,  
A mimic morn her sparkling towers disclose,  
An ample range the op'ning streets display.  
Give back the sun, and shed internal day; 250  
The circling wall with sky-built turrets frown'd,  
And look'd defiance to the realms around;  
A glimmering lake, without the walls retires,  
Inverts the trembling towers, and seems a grove of spires.

Bright, o'er the midst, on columns lifted high, 255  
A rising structure claims a loftier sky;

\* St. John's vision of the new Jerusalem. Rev. ch. xxi.

O'er the tall gates sublimer arches bend,  
 Courts larger lengthen, bolder walks ascend,  
 Starr'd with superior gems the porches shine,  
 And speak the royal residence within. 260

There, rob'd in state, high on a golden throne,  
 Mid suppliant kings, dread Montezuma shone :  
 Mild in his eye a temper'd grandeur fate,  
 Great seem'd his soul, with conscious power elate ;  
 In aspect open, social and serene, 265  
 Enclos'd with fav'rites and of friends unseen.

Round the rich throne, with various lustre bright,  
 Gems undistinguish'd cast a changing light ;  
 Sapphires and em'rals deck the splendent scene,  
 Sky-tinctures mingling with the vernal green ; 270  
 The ruby's blush, the amber's flames unfold,  
 And diamonds brighten from the burning gold ;  
 Through all the doom the living blazes blend,  
 And cast their rainbows where the arches bend.  
 Wide round the walls, with mimic action gay, 275  
 In order rang'd, historic figures stray,  
 And show, in Memphian style,\* with rival grace,  
 The boasted feats of all their regal race.

\* The Mexicans had the art of recording their history in hieroglyphics; and had carried this art to a degree of perfection nearly equal to that of the ancient Egyptians.



64 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

Thro' the full gates, and round each ample street,  
 Unnumber'd throngs, in various concourse meet, 280  
 Ply different toils, new walls and structures rear,  
 Or till the fields, or train the ranks of war.  
 Thro' spreading realms the skirts of empire bend,  
 New temples rise and other plains extend;  
 Thrice ten wide provinces, in culture gay, 285  
 Bless the same monarch and enlarge his sway.  
 A smile benignant kindling in his eyes,  
 Oh happy clime! the glad Columbus cries,  
 Far in the midland, safe from foreign foes,  
 Thy joys shall ripen as thy grandeur grows, 290  
 To endless years thy rising fame extend,  
 And fires of nations from thy sons descend.  
 May no gold-thirsty race thy temples tread,  
 Nor stain thy streams, nor heap thy plains with dead;  
 No Bovadilla seize the tempting spoil, 295  
 Ovando dark, or sacrilegious Boyle,\*

\* Bovadilla and Ovando are mentioned in the Introduction as the enemies and successors of Columbus in the government of Hispaniola. They began that system of cruelty towards the natives which, in a few years, almost depopulated that island, and was afterwards pursued by Cortez, Pizarro and others, in all the first settlements in Spanish America.

Boyle was a fanatical priest who accompanied Ovando, and under pretence of christianizing the natives by the sword, gave a sanction to the most shocking and extensive scenes of slaughter.

In

In mimic priesthood grave, or rob'd in state,

O'erwhelm thy glories in oblivious fate !

Vain are thy fondest hopes, the Power reply'd,

These rich abodes from rav'ning hosts to hide, 300

To teach hard guilt and cruelty to spare

The guardless prize, and check the waste of war.

Think not the vulture, o'er the field of slain,

Where base and brave promiscuous strow the plain,

Where the young hero, in the pride of charms, 305

Pours deeper crimson o'er his spotless arms,

Will pass the tempting prey, and glut his rage

On harder flesh, and carnage black with age ;

O'er all alike he darts his eager eye,

Whets the dire beak and hovers down the sky, 310

From countless corsees picks the dainty food,

And screams and fattens in the purest blood.

So the vile hosts, that trace thy daring way,

On happiest tribes with fiercest fury prey.

Thine the dread task, O Cortez, here to show 315

What unknown crimes can heighten human woe,

On these fair fields the blood of realms to pour,

Tread sceptres down, and print thy steps in gore,

With gold and carnage swell thy fateless mind,

And live and die the blackest of mankind. 320

He gains the shore. Behold his fortress rise,  
 The fleet in flames \* ascends the darken'd skies.  
 The march begins; the nations, from afar,  
 Quake in his sight, and wage the fruitless war;  
 O'er the rich provinces he bends his way, 325  
 Kings in his chain, and kingdoms for his prey;  
 While, rob'd in peace, great Montezuma stands,  
 And crowns and treasures sparkle in his hands,  
 Proffers the empire, yields the sceptred sway,  
 Bids vassal'd millions tremble and obey; 330  
 And plies the victor, with incessant prayer,  
 Thro' ravag'd realms the harmless race to spare.  
 But prayers, and tears, and sceptres plead in vain,  
 Nor threats can move him, nor a world restrain;  
 While blest religion's prostituted name, 335  
 And monkish fury guides the sacred flame:  
 O'er fanes and altars, fires unhallow'd bend,  
 Climb the wide walls, and up the towers ascend,

\* The conduct of Cortez, when he first landed on the coast of Mexico, was as remarkable for that hardy spirit of adventure; to which success gives the name of policy, as his subsequent operations were for cruelty and perfidy. As soon as his army was on shore, he dismantled his fleet of such articles as would be necessary in building a new one; he then set fire to all his ships, and burnt them in presence of his men; that they might fight their battles with more desperate courage, knowing that it would be impossible to save themselves from a victorious enemy by flight. He constructed a small fort on the shore, in which the iron and the rigging were preserved.

Pour, round the lowering skies, the smoky flood,  
And whelm the fields, and quench their rage in blood. 340

The Hero heard; and, with a heaving sigh,  
Dropp'd the full tear that started in his eye:  
Oh hapless day! his trembling voice reply'd,  
That saw my wand'ring streamer mount the tide!  
Oh! had the lamp of heav'n, to that bold fail, 345

Ne'er mark'd the passage nor awak'd the gale,  
Taught eastern worlds these beauteous climes to find,  
Nor led those tygers forth to curse mankind.

Then had the tribes beneath these bounteous skies,  
Seen their walls widen and their spires arise; 350  
Down the long tracts of time their glory shone,  
Broad as the day and lasting as the sun:

The growing realms, beneath thy shield that rest,  
O hapless monarch, still thy power had blest,  
Enjoy'd the pleasures that surround thy throne, 355  
Survey'd thy virtues and sublim'd their own.

Forgive me, prince; this impious arm hath led  
The unseen storm that blackens o'er thy head;  
Taught the dark sons of slaughter where to roam,  
To seize thy crown and seal thy nation's doom. 360  
Arm, sleeping empire, meet the daring band,  
Drive back th'invaders, save the sinking land—

Yet vain the strife ! behold the streaming blood !

Forgive me, Nature, and forgive me, God.

Thus, from his heart, while speaking sorrows roll, 365

The Power, reproving, sooth'd his tender soul :—

Father of this new world, thy tears give o'er,

Let virtue grieve and heav'n be blam'd no more.

Enough for man, with persevering mind,

To act his part and strive to bless his kind ; 370

Enough for thee, o'er thy dark age to soar,

And raise to light that long-secluded shore.

For this my guardian care thy youth inspir'd,

To virtue rais'd thee, and with glory fir'd,

Bade in thy plan each distant world unite, 375

And wing'd thy vessel for the vent'rous flight.

Nor think no blessings shall thy toils attend,

Or these fell tyrants can defeat their end.

Such impious deeds, in heav'n's all-ruling plan,

Lead in disguise the solid bliss of man. 380

Long have thy race, to narrow shores confin'd,

Trod the same round that cramp'd the roving mind ;

Now, borne on bolder wings, with happier flight,

The world's broad bounds unfolding to the sight,

The mind shall soar ; the nations catch the flame, 385

Enlarge their treaties and extend their fame ;

And

And buried gold, drawn bounteous from the mine,  
Give wings to commerce and the world refine.

Now to yon southern walls extend thy view,  
And mark the rival seats of rich Peru. 390

There Quito's airy plains, exalted high,  
With loftier temples rise along the sky;  
And elder Cusco's richer roofs unfold,  
Flame on the day, and shed their furs of gold.  
Another range, in these delightful climes, 395  
Spreads a broad theatre for unborn crimes.

Another Cortez shall the treasures view,  
The rage rekindle and the guilt renew;  
His treason, fraud, and every dire decree,  
O curst Pizarro, shall revive in thee. 400

There reigns a prince, whose hand the sceptre claims,  
Thro' a long lineage of imperial names:  
Where the brave roll of following Incas trace  
The distant father of their realm and race,

Immortal Capac. He, in youthful pride, 405  
With young Oella, his illustrious bride,  
In virtuous guile, proclaim'd their birth begun,  
From the pure splendors of their God, the sun;  
By him commission'd o'er these realms around,

A polish'd state on peaceful laws to found, 410

To crush the gods that human victims claim,  
 And point all worship to a nobler name,  
 With cheerful rites, the due devotions pay  
 To the bright beam, that gives the changing day.

On this great plan, the children of the skies 415  
 Bade, in the wild, a growing empire rise;  
 Beneath their hand, and sacred to their fame,  
 Arose yon walls, that meet the solar flame.  
 Succeeding sovereigns spread their bounds afar,  
 Enlarg'd their leagues, and footh'd the rage of war; 420  
 Till these surrounding realms the sceptre own,  
 And pay their homage to the sacred sun.  
 Behold, o'er yon wide lake their temple rise,  
 Seat of the sun and pillar of the skies.  
 The roofs of burnish'd gold, the blazing spires 425  
 Light the glad heav'ns and lose their upward fires;  
 Fix'd in the flaming front, with living ray,  
 A diamond circlet gives the rival day;  
 In whose bright face for ever looks abroad  
 The radiant image of the beaming God. 430  
 Round the wide courts, and in the solemn dome,  
 A white-rob'd train of holy virgins bloom;  
 Whose pious hands the sacred rites require,  
 To grace the offerings, and preserve the fire.

On

On this blest isle, with flowery garlands crown'd, 435  
 That ancient Pair, in charms of youth, were found,  
 Whose union'd souls the mystic code design'd,  
 To bless the nations \* and reform mankind.

\* From the traditions of Capac and Oella, mentioned by the Spanish historians, they appear to have been very great and distinguished characters. About three centuries previous to the discovery of that country by the Spaniards, the natives of Peru were as rude savages as any in America. They had no fixed habitations, no ideas of permanent property; they wandered naked like the beasts, and, like them, depended on the events of each day for a precarious subsistence. At this period, Manco Capac, and his wife Mama Oella, appeared on a small island in the lake Titiaca; near which the city of Cusco was afterwards erected. These persons, in order to establish a belief of their divinity in the minds of the people, were clothed in white garments of cotton; and declared themselves descended from the sun, who was their father and the god of that country. They affirmed, that he was offended at their cruel and perpetual wars, their barbarous modes of worship, and their neglecting to make the best use of the blessings he was constantly bestowing, in fertilizing the earth and producing vegetation; that he pitied their wretched state, and had sent his own children to instruct them, and to establish a number of wise regulations, by which they might be rendered happy.

By some extraordinary method of persuasion, these persons drew together a number of the savage tribes, laid the foundations of the city of Cusco, and established what was called the kingdom of the Sun; or the Peruvian empire. In the reign of Manco Capac, the dominion was extended about eight leagues from the city; and at the end of three centuries, it was established fifteen hundred miles on the coast of the Pacific ocean; and from that ocean to the mountains of the Andes. During this period, through a succession of twelve monarchs, the original constitution, established by the first Inca, remained unaltered; and was at last overturned by an accident, which no human wisdom could foresee or prevent.

For a more particular disquisition on the character and institutions of this great legislator, the reader is referred to a dissertation prefixed to the third book.



The Hero heard, and thus the Power besought:—  
 Declare what arts the wonderous blessings wrought; 440  
 What human skill, in that benighted age,  
 In savage souls, could quell the barb'rous rage?  
 With leagues of peace combine a wide domain?  
 And teach the Virtues in their laws to reign?  
 Long is their story, said the Power divine, 445  
 Their labours great, and glorious the design;

Mama Oella is said to have invented many of the domestic arts, particularly that of making garments of cotton and other vegetable substances.

In the passage preceding this reference, I have alluded to most of the traditions, relating to the manner of their introducing themselves, and establishing their dominion. In the remainder of the second, and through the whole of the third book, I have given what may be supposed a probable narrative of their real origin and conduct. I have thrown the episode into an epic form, and given it so considerable a place in the poem, for the purpose of exhibiting *in action* the characters, manners, and sentiments of the different tribes of savages, that inhabit the mountains of South America.

In reviewing this part of my subject, I have to lament, that so extraordinary and meritorious a poem, as the Araucana of Don Alonso de Ercilla, of the sixteenth century, has never yet appeared in our language. The account given of that work by Voltaire, excited my curiosity at an early day; as I conceived the manners and characters of the mountain savages of Chili, as described by that heroic Spaniard, must have opened a new field of poetry, rich with uncommon ornaments.

That elegant and concise sketch of it, lately given to the public by Mr. Hayley, has come into my hands, since I have been writing these notes, and preparing this poem for the press: yet it gives me reason to hope, with every friend of literature, that the whole of that great work will ere long be presented to the English reader by the same hand.

And

And tho', to earthly minds, their actions rest,  
By years obscur'd, in flowery fiction drest,  
Yet my glad voice shall wake their honour'd name,  
And give their virtues to immortal fame. 450

Led by his father's wars, in early prime,  
Young Capac wander'd from a northern clime ;  
Along these shores, with richer blooms array'd,  
Thro' fertile vales the vent'rous armies stray'd.  
He saw the tribes unnumber'd range the plain, 455  
And rival chiefs, by rage and slaughter, reign ;  
He saw the fires their dreadful gods adore,  
Their altars staining with their children's gore ;  
Yet mark'd their reverence for the sun, whose beam  
Proclaims his bounties and his power supreme ; 460  
Who sails in happier skies, diffusing good,  
Demands no victim, and receives no blood.

In peace return'd with his victorious fire,  
Fair glory's charms his youthful soul inspire,  
To conquer nations on a nobler plan, 465  
And build his greatness on the bliss of man.

By nature form'd to daring deeds of fame,  
Tall, bold and beauteous rose his stately frame ,  
Strong mov'd his limbs, a mild majestic grace  
Beam'd from his eyes and open'd in his face ; 470  
O'er

74 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

O'er the dark world his mind superior shone,  
 And soaring, seem'd the semblance of the sun.  
 Now fame's prophetic visions lift his eyes,  
 And future empires from his labours rise;  
 Yet softer fires his daring views controul, 475  
 Sway the warm wish and fill his changing soul.  
 Shall the bright genius, kindled from above,  
 Bend to the milder, gentler voice of love,  
 That bounds his glories, and forbids to part,  
 From that calm bower, that held his plighted heart? 480  
 Or shall the toils, imperial heroes claim,  
 Fire his bold bosom with a patriot flame,  
 Bid sceptres wait him on Peruvia's shore,  
 And blest Oella meet his eyes no more?  
 Retiring pensive, near the wonted shade, 485  
 His unseen steps approach the beauteous maid.  
 Her raven-locks roll on her heaving breast,  
 And wave luxuriant round her slender waist,  
 Gay wreaths of flowers her lovely brows adorn,  
 And her white raiment mocks the pride of morn. 490  
 Her busy hand sustains a bending bough,  
 Where cotton clusters spread their robes of snow,  
 From opening pods unbinds the fleecy store,  
 And culls her labours for the evening bower.

For

For she before, by deep invention led, 495  
 Had found the skill to turn the twisting thread,  
 To spread the woof, the shuttle to command,  
 Till various garments grac'd her forming hand.  
 Here, while her thoughts with her own Capac rove,  
 O'er former-scenes of innocence and love, 500  
 Through many a field his fancied dangers share,  
 And wait him glorious from the distant war ;  
 Blest with the ardent wish, her sprightly mind  
 A snowy vesture for the prince design'd ;  
 She seeks the purest wool, to web the fleece, 505  
 The sacred emblem of returning peace.  
 Sudden his near approach her breast alarms ;  
 He flew enraptur'd to her yielding arms,  
 And lost, dissolving in a softer flame,  
 The distant empire and the fire of fame. 510  
 At length, retiring o'er the homeward field,  
 Their mutual minds to happy converse yield,  
 O'er various scenes of blissful life they ran,  
 When thus the warrior to the maid began :—  
 Joy of my life, thou know'st my roving mind, 515  
 With these grim tribes, in dark abodes, confin'd,  
 With grief hath mark'd what vengeful passions sway  
 The bickering bands, and sweep the race away.

Where

76 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

Where late my distant steps the war purfu'd,  
The fertile plains grew boundless as I view'd; 520  
Increasing nations trod the waving wild,  
And joyous nature more delightful finil'd.

No changing seasons there the flowers deform,  
No dread volcano, and no mountain storm;  
Rains ne'er invade, nor livid lightnings play, 525  
Nor clouds obscure the radiant power of day.

But, while the God, in ceaseless glory bright,  
Rolls o'er the day, and fires his stars by night,  
Unbounded fulness flows beneath his reign,  
Seas yield their treasures, fruits adorn the plain; 530

Warm'd by his beam, their mountains pour the flood,  
And the cool breezes wake beneath the God.  
My anxious thoughts indulge the great design,  
To form those nations to a sway divine;

Destroy the rites of every dreadful power, 535  
Whose crimson altars glow with human gore;  
To laws and mildness teach the realms to yield,  
And richer fruits to grace the cultur'd field.

But great, my charmer, is the task of fame,  
The countless tribes to temper and to tame, 540  
Full many a spacious wild my soul must see,  
Spread dreary bounds between my joys and me;

And

And yon bright Godhead circle many a year,  
 Each lonely evening number'd with a tear.  
 Long robes of white \* my shoulders must embrace, 545  
 To speak my lineage of etherial race ;  
 That wondering tribes may honour and obey  
 The radiant offspring of the Power of day.

And when thro' cultur'd fields their bowers increase,  
 And streams and plains survey the works of peace, 550  
 When these glad hands the rod of nations claim,  
 And happy millions bless thy Capac's name,  
 Then shall he feign a journey to the sun,  
 To bring the partner of the peaceful throne ;  
 So shall descending kings the line sustain, 555  
 And unborn ages bloom beneath their reign.

Will then my Fair, in that delightful hour,  
 Forfake these wilds and hail a happier bower ?  
 And now consenting, with approving smiles,  
 Bid the young warrior tempt the daring toils ? 560  
 And, sweetly patient, wait the flight of days,  
 That crown our labours with immortal praise ?

\* As the art of spinning is said to have been invented by Oella, it is no improbable fiction, to suppose they first assumed these white garments of cotton, as an emblem of the sun, in order to inspire that reverence for their persons which was necessary to their success. Such a dress may likewise be supposed to have been continued in the family, as a badge of royalty.

Silent

Then let us range, and spread the peaceful sway,  
The radiant children of the power of day.

The lovely counsel pleas'd. The smiling chief  
Approv'd her courage and dispell'd her grief;  
Then to the distant bower in haste they move, 615  
Begin their labours and prepare to rove.  
Soon grow the robes beneath her forming care,  
And the fond parents wed the princely pair;  
But, overwhelm'd in grief, beheld th'approaching dawn,  
Their joys all vanish'd, and their children gone. 620  
Nine days they stray'd; the tenth effulgent morn  
Beheld the <sup>v</sup>steps that blissful isle adorn.  
The toil begins; to every neighbouring band  
They speak the message and their faith demand;  
With various art superior powers display, 625  
To prove their lineage and confirm their sway.  
Th'astonish'd tribes believe with glad surprise,  
The gods descended from the fav'ring skies;  
Adore their persons, rob'd in shining white,  
Receive their laws, and leave each horrid rite; 630  
Build, with assisting toil, the golden throne,  
And hail and bless the sceptre of the Sun.

A  
DISSERTATION  
ON THE  
GENIUS AND INSTITUTIONS  
OF  
MANCO CAPAC.

**A**LTHOUGH the original inhabitants of America in general deserve to be classed among the most unimproved savages that have ever been discovered; yet the Mexican and Peruvian governments exhibit remarkable instances of order and regularity. In the difference of national character between the people of these two empires we may discern the influence of political systems on the human mind, and infer the importance of the task which a legislator undertakes, in attempting to reduce a barbarous people under the controul of government and laws. The Mexican constitution was formed to render its subjects brave and powerful; but, while it succeeded in this object, it tended to remove them farther from the real blessings of society, than they were while in the rudest state of nature. The history of the world affords no instance of men whose manners were equally ferocious, and whose superstition was more bloody and unrelenting. On the

F

contrary,



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contrary, the establishments of Manco Capac carry the marks of a most benevolent and pacific system ; they tended to humanize the world, and render his people happy ; while his ideas of the Deity were so perfect, as to bear a comparison with the enlightened doctrines of Socrates or Plato.

The most distinguished characters in history, who have been considered as legislators among barbarous nations, are Moses, Lycurgus, Solon, Numa, Mahomet, and Peter of Russia. Of these, only the two former and the two latter appear really to deserve that character. Solon and Numa possessed not the means nor the opportunity of shewing their talents in the business of original legislation. Athens and Rome were considerably advanced in civilization, before these persons arose. The most they could do was to correct and amend constitutions already formed. Solon, in particular, may be considered as a wise politician ; but by no means as the founder of a nation. The Athenians were too far advanced in society to admit any radical alteration in their form of government ; unless recourse could have been had to the representative system, by establishing a perfect equality of rank, and instructing all the people in their duties and their rights ; a system which was never understood by any ancient legislators. The institutions of Numa were more effective and durable ; his religious ceremonies were, for many ages, the most powerful check upon the licentious and turbulent Romans, the greater part of whom were ignorant slaves. By inculcating a remarkable reverence for the gods, and making it necessary to consult the auspices, when any thing important was to be transacted, he rendered the popular superstition

perdition subservient to the views of policy, and gave the senate a steady check upon the extravagance of the plebeians. But the constitutions of Rome and Athens, however the subject of so much injudicious applause, were never fixed upon any permanent principles; though the wisdom of some of their rulers, and the spirit of liberty that inspired the people, justly demand our admiration.

EACH of the other legislators above-mentioned deserves a particular consideration, as having acted in stations somewhat similar to that of the Peruvain lawgiver. Three objects are to be attended to by the legislator of a barbarous people. *First*, That his system be such as is capable of reducing the greatest number of men under one jurisdiction. *Secondly*, That it apply to such principles in human nature for its support, as are universal and permanent, in order to ensure the duration of the government. *Thirdly*, That it admit of improvements correspondent to any advancement in knowledge or variation of circumstances that may happen to its subjects, without endangering the principle of government by such innovations.—So far, therefore, as the systems of those legislators agree with these fundamental principles, they are worthy of respect; and so far as they deviate, they may be considered as defective and imperfect.

\*To begin with Moses and Lycurgus,—It is necessary in the first place to observe, that, in order to judge of the merit of any institutions, we must take into view the peculiar character of the people for whom they were framed. For want of this attention, many of the laws of Moses have been

ridiculed, and many establishments of Lycurgus have been censured. The Jews, who were led by Moses out of Egypt, were not only uncivilized, but, having just risen to independence from a state of servitude, they united the manners of servants and of savages; and their national character is a composition of servility and contumacy, ignorance, superstition, filthiness, and cruelty. Of their cruelty as a people, we need no other proof than the account of their avengers of blood, and the readiness with which the whole congregation turned executioners and stoned to death the devoted offenders. The leprosy, a disease now wholly unknown, was undoubtedly produced by their total want of cleanliness, continued for successive generations. In this view the frequent ablutions, the peculiar modes of trial, and many other institutions, may be vindicated from ridicule, and proved to be not only wise, but even necessary regulations.

THE Spartan lawgiver has been equally censured for the toleration of theft and adultery. Among that race of barbarians, these crimes were too general to admit of total prevention or universal punishment. By vesting all property in the community, instead of encouraging theft, he removed the possibility of the crime; and, in a nation where licentiousness was generally indulged, it was a great step towards introducing a purity of manners, to punish adultery in all cases, wherein the crime was not committed by the free consent of all parties injured or interested.

UNTIL the institution of representative republics, which  
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are of recent date, it was always a fact confirmed by experience, that those constitutions of government were best calculated for immediate energy and duration, which were interwoven with some religious system. The legislator, who appears in the character of an inspired person, renders his political institutions sacred, and interests the conscience, as well as the judgment, in their support. The Jewish law-giver had this advantage over the Spartan : he appeared not in the character of a mere earthly governor, but as an interpreter of the divine will. By enjoining a religious observance of certain rites, he formed his people to habitual obedience ; by directing their cruelty against the breakers of the laws, he at least mitigated the rancour of private hatred ; by forbidding usury, and directing that real property should return to the original families in the year of Jubilee, he prevented too great an inequality of property ; and by selecting a particular tribe, to be the guardians and interpreters of religion, he prevented its mysteries from being the subject of profane and vulgar investigation. To secure the permanency of his institutions, he prohibited any intercourse with foreigners, by severe restrictions ; and formed his people to habits and a character disagreeable to other nations ; by which means any foreign intercourse was prevented, from the mutual hatred of both parties.

To these institutions the laws of Lycurgus bear a most striking resemblance. The features of his constitution were severe and forbidding ; it was, however, calculated to inspire the most enthusiastic love of liberty and martial honour. In no country was the patriotic passion more

energetic than in Sparta; no laws ever excluded the idea of separate property in an equal degree, or inspired a more thorough contempt for the manners of other nations. The utter prohibition of money, commerce, and almost every thing desirable to effeminate nations, entirely excluded foreigners from Sparta; and, while it inspired the people with contempt for others, it made them agreeable to each other. By these means, Lycurgus rendered the nation powerful and warlike; and, to insure the duration of his government, he endeavoured to interest the consciences of his people by the aid of oracles, and by the oath he is said have exacted from them, to obey his laws till his return; when he went into a voluntary and perpetual exile.

FROM this view of the Jewish and Spartan institutions, applied to the principles before stated, they appear, in the two first articles, considerably imperfect, and in the last, totally defective. Neither of them was calculated to bring any considerable territory or number of men under one jurisdiction; from this circumstance alone, they could not be rendered permanent, as they must be constantly exposed to their more powerful neighbours. But the third object of legislation, that of providing for the future progress of society, which, as it regards the happiness of mankind, is the most important of the three, was, in both instances, entirely neglected. These systems appear to have been formed with an express design to prevent all future improvement in knowledge, or enlargement of the human mind; and to fix those nations for ever in a state of ignorance, superstition and barbarism. To vindicate their authors  
from

from an imputation of weakness or inattention in this particular, it may be urged that they were each of them surrounded by nations more powerful than their own ; it was therefore impossible for them to commence an establishment upon any other plan.

THE institutions of Mahomet are next to be considered. The first object of legislation appears to have been better understood by the Arabian prophet, than by either of the preceding sages ; his jurisdiction was capable of being enlarged to any extent of territory, and governing any number of nations that might be subjugated by his powerful and enthusiastic armies ; and to obtain this object, his system of religion was admirably calculated. Like Moses, he convinced his people that he acted as the vicegerent of heaven ; but with this capital advantage, adapting his religion to the natural feelings and propensities of mankind, he multiplied his followers, by the allurements of pleasure, and the promise of a sensual paradise. These circumstances were likewise sure to render his constitution permanent. His religious system was so easy to be understood, so splendid and so inviting, there could be no danger that the people would lose sight of its principles, and no necessity of future prophets, to explain the doctrines, or reform the nation. To these advantages, if we add the exact and rigid military discipline, the splendor and sacredness of the monarch, and that total ignorance of the people, which such a system will produce and perpetuate, the establishment must be evidently calculated for a considerable extent and duration. But the last and most important end of government, that



of mental improvement and social happiness, was deplorably lost in the institution. And there was probably more learning and cultivated genius in Arabia, in the days of this extraordinary character, than can now be found in all the Turkish dominions.

On the contrary, the enterprising mind of the Russian monarch appears to have been wholly bent on the arts of civilization, and the improvement of society among his subjects. Happy in a legal title to a throne, which already commanded a prodigious extent of country, he found that the first object of government was already secured; and by applying himself with great sagacity and perseverance to the third object, he was sure that the second would be a necessary and invariable consequence. He effected his purposes, important as they were, merely by the introduction of the arts, and the encouragement of politer manners. The greatness of his character appears not so much in his institutions, which he copied from other nations, as in the extraordinary measures he followed to introduce them, the judgment he showed in selecting and adapting them to the genius of his subjects, and his surprising assiduity and success, by which he raised a savage people to a dignified rank among European nations. All his plans were formed to encourage the future progress of society; and their duration was ensured by their obvious value and importance.

To the nature and operation of the several forms of government above-mentioned, we will compare that of the Peruvian lawgiver. It is probable that the savages of Peru  
before

before the time of Capac, among other objects of adoration, paid homage to the sun. By availing himself of this popular sentiment, he appeared, like Moses and Mahomet, in the character of a divine legislator, endowed with supernatural powers. After impressing these ideas strongly on the minds of the people, drawing together a number of the tribes, and rendering them subservient to his benevolent purposes, he applied himself to forming the outlines of a plan of policy, capable of founding and regulating an extensive empire, wisely calculated for perpetual duration, and expressly designed to improve the knowledge, peace, and happiness of a considerable portion of mankind. In the apportionment of the lands, and the assignment of real property, he invented a mode somewhat resembling the feudal system of Europe: yet this system was wisely checked in its operation, by a law, similar to that of Moses, which regulated landed possessions in the year of Jubilee. He divided the lands into three parts; the first was consecrated to the uses of religion, the second set apart for the Inca and his family, to enable him to defray the expences of government, and to appear in the style of a monarch; the third, and much the largest portion, was allotted to the people; and this allotment was repeated every year, and varied according to the number and exigencies of each family.

As the Incan race appeared in the character of divinities, it was necessary that a subordination of ranks should be established, in order to render the distinction between the monarch and his people more perceptible. With this view  
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he created a band of nobles, who were distinguished by personal and hereditary honours. These were united to the monarch by the strongest ties of interest; in peace they acted as judges, and superintended the police of the empire; in war they commanded in the armies. The next order of men were the respectable peasantry of the country, who composed the principal strength of the nation. Below these was a class of men who were the servants of the public, who cultivated the public lands. They possessed no property, and their only security depended on their regular industry and peaceable demeanour. Above all these orders were the Inca and his family. He was possessed of absolute and uncontrollable power; his mandates were regarded as the word of Heaven, and the double guilt of impiety and rebellion attended on disobedience. To impress the utmost veneration for the Incan family, it was a fundamental principle, that the royal blood should never be contaminated by any foreign alliance. The mysteries of religion were preserved sacred by the high-priest of the royal family, under the controul of the king; and celebrated with rites, capable of making the deepest impression on the multitude. The annual distribution of the lands, while it provided for the varying circumstances of each family, strengthened the bands of society, by preventing the different orders from interfering with each other; the peasants could not vie with their superiors, and the nobles could not be subjected by misfortune to a subordinate station. A constant habit of industry was inculcated upon all ranks by the surprising force of example and emulation. The cultivation  
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of the soil, which in most other countries is considered as one of the lowest employments, was here regarded as a divine art. Having had no knowledge of it before, and being taught it by the children of their God, the people viewed it as a sacred privilege, and considered it as an honour, to imitate and assist the sun in opening the bosom of the earth and producing vegetation. That the government might be able to exercise the endearing acts of benevolence, the produce of the public lands was reserved in magazines, to supply the wants of the unfortunate, as a deposit for the people in times of general scarcity, and as a resource in case of an invasion.

THESE are the outlines of a government, the most simple and energetic conceivable, and capable of reducing the greatest number of men under one jurisdiction; at the same time; accommodating its principle of action to every state of society, and every stage of improvement, by a singular and happy application to the passions of the human mind, it encouraged the advancement of knowledge, without being endangered by success. That such a government has a fair chance for duration is evident from this consideration, that a band of nobles are ever the firm supporters of regal authority; unless the monarch is so limited in his power that the nobles despise his influence. This could not be the case in Peru; the nobles were justly proud of their elevated station, though they could have no ambition to controul the Inca. They were sensible that their interest was connected with that of the monarch; and, supposing the influence of religion to be out of the question, they would not attempt to destroy

destroy an institution on which their happiness depended. A check equally effective was, by the constitution of human nature, imposed on the Inca. Elevated above the competition and rivalry which corrode and torment the bosoms of the great, he could have no ambition to gratify, and no motive to induce him to an improper exercise of arbitrary power.

In the traits of character which distinguish this institution, we may discern all the great strokes of each of the legislators above-mentioned. The pretensions of Capac to divine authority were as artfully contrived, and as effectual in their consequences, as those of Mahomet; his exploding the worship of evil beings and objects of terror, forbidding human sacrifices, inculcating more rational ideas of the Deity, and accommodating the rites of worship to a God of justice and benevolence, produced a greater change in the national character of his people, than any of the laws of Moses; like Pater, he provided for the future improvement of society, while his actions were never measured upon the small and contracted scale, which limited the genius of Lycurgus.

Thus far we find the political system of Capac at least equal to those of the most celebrated ancient or modern lawgivers. But in one particular his character is placed beyond all comparison; I mean for his religious institutions; and the rational ideas he had formed of the nature and attributes of the Deity.

AND

AND here I shall premise, that idolatrous nations have never been guilty of those glaring absurdities with which they are usually charged by the Christian world. The Persian or Peruvian, when he directed his adoration to the Sun, considered it as the place of residence for the unknown Deity, whom he worshipped, and who communicated from thence the blessings of light, warmth, and vegetation; the Greek, who bowed at the statue of Jupiter, supposed it animated with the presence of his God; the Egyptian Apis, Isis, and Orus, the calf, the leek, and the onion, though the theme of universal ridicule to other nations, were, in their first consecration, like the Jewish cherubim, symbolical representations of the nature and attributes of their deities. No man ever erected a stock or a stone for a real object of worship; but all ignorant nations have paid their adoration before the symbol of the Deity, in some shape or other, and directed their homage to the place of his supposed residence. Even among enlightened nations, we find many traces of the same ideas; the Papist bows to the picture and the crucifix; and the Methodist rolls up his eyes in prayer to the sky. Perhaps unassisted wisdom can rise no higher; and the reason why idol worship was forbidden in the divine law, was not because of the erroneous ideas of the original institutors, but because the views of the vulgar, in process of time, are apt to stop short at the intermediate object, and to lose sight of the original essence. But the great crime of idolatrous nations consisted in their ascribing to the Deity the passions and attributes of the Devil, and in the horrid and murderous rites of their worship. Mankind are more inclined to consider the Deity as a  
 God

God of vengeance than a God of mercy. Even among Christians, most persons ascribe afflictions to the hand of Heaven, and prosperity to their own merit and prudence. This principle operates in its full effect among savages. They usually form no idea of a general superintending Providence; they consider not the Deity as the author of their beings, the creator of the world, and the dispenser of the happiness they enjoy; they discern him not in the usual course of nature, in the sunshine and in the shower, the productions of the earth, and the blessing of society; they find a Deity only in the storm, the earthquake, and the whirlwind; or ascribe to him the evils of pestilence and famine; they consider him as interposing in wrath to change the course of nature, and exercising the attributes of rage and revenge. They adore him with rites suited to these attributes, with horror, with penance, and with sacrifice; they imagine him pleased with the severity of their mortifications, with the oblations of blood, and the cries of human victims; and hope to compound for greater judgments, by voluntary sufferings and horrid sacrifices, suited to the relish of his taste.

PERHAPS no single criterion can be given, which will determine more accurately the state of society in any age or nation, than their general ideas concerning the nature and attributes of the Deity. In the most enlightened periods of antiquity, only a very few of their wisest philosophers, a Socrates, a Tully, or a Confucius, ever formed a just idea on the subject, or described the Deity as a God of purity, justice, and benevolence. Can any thing then be more  
astonishing

astonishing than to view a savage native of the southern wilds of America, rising in an age, void of every trace of learning or refinement, and acquiring, by the mere efforts of reason, a sublime and rational idea of the parent of the universe !

HE taught the nation to consider him as the God of order and regularity ; ascribing to his influence the rotation of the seasons, the productions of the earth, and the blessings of health ; especially attributing to his inspiration the wisdom of their laws, and that happy constitution, which was the delight and veneration of the people.

THESE humane ideas of religion had a sensible effect upon the manners of the nation. They never began an offensive war with their savage neighbours : and, whenever their country was invaded, they made war, not to extirpate, but to civilize. The conquered tribes, and those taken captive, were adopted into the nation ; and, by blending with the conquerors, forgot their former rage and ferocity.

A SYSTEM so just and benevolent, as might be expected, was attended with success. In about three centuries, the dominions of the Incas had extended fifteen hundred miles in length, and had introduced peace and prosperity through the whole region. The arts of society had been carried to a considerable degree of improvement, and the authority of the Incan race universally acknowledged ; when an event happened, that disturbed the tranquillity of the  
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the empire. Huana Capac, the twelfth monarch, had reduced the powerful kingdom of Quito, and annexed it to his empire. To conciliate the affections of his new subjects, he married a daughter of the ancient king of Quito. Thus, by violating a fundamental law of the Incas, he left at his death a disputed succession to the throne. Atabalipa, the son of Huana, by the heirs of Quito, being in possession of the principal force of the Peruvian armies, which was left at that place on the death of his father, gave battle to his brother Huascar, who was the elder son of Huana by a lawful wife, and legal heir to the crown. After a long and destructive civil war, the former was victorious; and thus was that flourishing and happy kingdom left a prey to civil dissensions, and to the few soldiers of Pizarro, who happened at that juncture to make a descent upon their coast. Thus he effected an easy conquest and an utter destruction of that unfortunate people. It is however extremely obvious, that this deplorable event is not to be charged on Capac, as the consequence of any defect in his institution. It is impossible that any original legislator should effectually guard against the folly of a future sovereign. Capac had not only removed every temptation that could induce a wise prince to wish for a change in the constitution, but had connected the ruin of his authority with the change; for he, who disregards any part of institutions deemed sacred, teaches his people to consider the whole as an imposture. Had he made a law ordaining that the Peruvians should be absolved from their allegiance to a prince, who should violate the laws, it would evidently have implied possible error and imperfection in those persons whom the people were ordered to regard

regard as Divinities : the reverence due to characters who made such high pretensions, would have been weakened ; and, instead of rendering the constitution perfect, such a law would have been its greatest defect. Besides, it is probable the rupture might have been healed, and the succession settled, with as little difficulty as frequently happens with partial revolutions in other kingdoms, had not the descent of the Spaniards prevented it. And this event, to a man in that age and country, was totally beyond the possibility of human foresight. But viewing the concurrence of these fatal accidents, which reduced this flourishing empire to a level with many other ruined and departed kingdoms, it only proves that no human system has the privilege to be perfect.

ON the whole, it is evident, that the system of Capac is the most surprising exertion of human genius to be found in the history of mankind. When we consider him as an individual emerging from the midst of a barbarous people, having seen no possible example of the operation of laws in any country, originating a plan of religion and policy never equalled by the sages of antiquity, civilizing an extensive empire, and rendering religion and government subservient to the general happiness of mankind, there is no danger that we grow too warm in his praise, or pronounce too high an eulogium on his character. Had such a genius appeared in Greece or Rome, he had been the subject of universal admiration ; had he arisen in the favourite land of Turkey, his praises had filled a thousand pages in the diffusive writings of Voltaire.



THE  
VISION OF COLUMBUS.

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BOOK III.

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## A R G U M E N T.

*The actions of Capac. A general invasion threatened by the mountain savages. Rocha, the Inca's son, sent with a few companions to offer terms of peace. His embassy. His adventure with the worshippers of the Vólcano. With those of the storm, on the Andes. Falls in with the savage armies. Character and speech of Zamor, their chief. Sacrifice of Rocha's companions. Death-song of Azonto. War-dance. March of the savage armies down the mountains to Peru. Incan army meets them. Battle joins. Peruvians routed by an eclipse of the sun. They fly to Cusco. Grief of Oella, supposing the darkness to be occasioned by the death of her son Rocha. Sun appears. Peruvian army assembles, and they discover Rocha on an altar in the savage camp. They march in haste out of the city and engage the savages. Exploits of Capac. Death of Zamor. Recovery of Rocha, and submission of the enemy.*



Till, fir'd with rage, they range the wonted wood,  
And feast their souls on future scenes of blood. 20

Where yon blue fummits hang their cliffs on high,  
Frown o'er the plains and lengthen round the sky ;  
Where vales exalted thro' the breaches run,  
And drink the purer splendors of the sun,  
The tribes innumerable meditate the blow, 25  
To blend their force and overwhelm the world below:  
Capac, with caution, views the dark design,  
From countless wilds what hostile myriads join ;  
And seeks the means, by proffer'd leagues of peace,  
To calm their rage and bid the discord cease. 30

His eldest hope, young Rocha, at his call,  
Leaves the deep confines of the temple wall ;  
In whose fair form, in lucid garments drest,  
Began the sacred function of the priest.

In early youth, ere yet the genial sun 35  
Had twice six changes o'er his childhood run,  
The blooming prince, beneath his parents' hand,  
Learn'd all the laws that sway'd the sacred land ;  
With rites mysterious \* serv'd the Power divine,  
Prepar'd the altar and adorn'd the shrine, 40

\* The high-priest of the Sun was always one of the royal family ; and, in every generation after the first, was brother to the king. This office probably began with Rocha, as he was the first who was capable of receiving it, and as it was necessary, in the education of the prince, that he should be initiated in the sacred mysteries.

Responsive hail'd, with still returning praise,  
 Each circling season that the God displays,  
 Sooth'd with funeral hymns the parting dead,  
 At nuptial feasts the joyful chorus led;  
 While evening incense, and the morning song, 45  
 Rose from his hand or trembled on his tongue.

Thus, form'd for empire, ere he gain'd the sway;  
 To rule with reverence, and with power obey,  
 Reflect the glories of the parent Sun,  
 And shine the Cap of his future throne, 50  
 Employ'd his ripening years; till now, from far,  
 The distant fields proclaim approaching war;  
 Matur'd for active scenes he quits the shrine,  
 To aid the council or in arms to shine.

Where the mild monarch courtly throngs enclose, 55  
 Sublime in modest majesty he rose,  
 With reverence bow'd, conspicuous o'er the rest,  
 Approach'd the throne, and thus the sire address'd:—  
 Great king of nations, heav'n-descended sage,  
 Guard of my youth and glory of my age, 60  
 These pontiff robes to my blest brother's hand  
 Glad I resign, and wait thy kind command.  
 Should war invade, permit thy son to wield  
 The shaft of vengeance through th'untempted field:



Led by thy powerful arm, my soul shall brave 65  
 The haughtiest foe, or find a glorious grave;  
 For this dread conflict all our force demands,  
 In one wide field to whelm the brutal bands,  
 Pour to the mountain gods their wonted food,  
 And shield thy realms from future scenes of blood: 70  
 Yet, oh, may sovereign mercy first ordain  
 Propounded compact to the savage train:  
 Fearless of foes their own dark wilds I'll trace,  
 To quell the rage and give the terms of peace,  
 Teach the grim tribes to bow beneath thy sway, 75  
 And taste the blessings of the Power of day.

The fire return'd:—My earliest wish you know,  
 To shield from slaughter and preserve the foe,  
 In bands of mutual peace all tribes to bind,  
 And live the friend and guardian of mankind. 80  
 Should strife begin, thy youthful arm shall share  
 The toils of glory through the walks of war;  
 But o'er those hideous hills, thro' climes of snow,  
 With reason's voice to lure the savage foe,  
 To 'scape their snares, their jarring souls combine, 85  
 Claims hardier limbs and riper years than thine.  
 Yet one of heav'nly race the task requires,  
 Whose mystic rites controul th'etherial fires;

So the sooth'd Godhead proves, to faithless eyes,  
 His sway on earth and empire of the skies. 90  
 Some veteran chief, in those rough labours try'd,  
 Shall aid the toil, and go thy faithful guide ;  
 O'er dreary heights thy sinking limbs sustain,  
 Teach the dark wiles of each insidious train,  
 Through all extremes of life thy voice attend, 95  
 In council lead thee, or in arms defend ;  
 While three firm youths, thy chosen friends, shall go  
 To learn the climes and meditate the foe ;  
 That wars of future years their aid may find,  
 To serve the realm and save the savage kind. 100  
 Rise then, my son, bright partner of my fame,  
 With early toils to build thy sacred name ;  
 In high behest these heav'nly tidings bear,  
 To bless mankind and ward the waste of war.  
 To those dark hosts, where shivering mountains run, 105  
 Proclaim the bounties of our sire the Sun.  
 On these fair plains, beneath his happier skies,  
 Tell how his fruits in boundless plenty rise ;  
 How the bright Power, whose all-delighting soul,  
 Taught round the courts of heav'n his stars to roll, 110  
 To us his peaceful sons hath kindly given  
 His purest laws, the fav'rite grace of heaven ;

Bids

Bids every tribe the same glad laws attend,  
 His realms to widen and his fates defend,  
 Confess and emulate his bounteous sway, 115  
 And give his blessings where he gives the day.

Yet, should the gathering legions still prepare  
 The shaft of slaughter for the barb'rous war,  
 Tell them we know to tread the crimson plain,  
 And heav'n's bright children never yield to man. 120

But oh, my child, with steps of caution go,  
 The ways are hideous, and enrag'd the foe;  
 Blood stains their altars, all their feasts are blood,  
 Death their delight, and darkness reigns their God;  
 Tygers and vultures, storms and earthquakes share 125  
 Their rites of worship and their spoils of war.  
 Should'st thou, my Rocha, tempt their vengeful ire,  
 Should those dear relics feed a savage fire,  
 Deep sighs would heave thy wretched mother's breast,  
 The pale sun sink in clouds of darkness drest, 130  
 Thy fire and hapless nations rue the day  
 That drew thy steps from these sad walls away.

Yet go; 'tis virtue calls; and realms unknown,  
 By these long toils, may bless thy future throne;  
 Millions of unborn souls in time may see 135  
 Their doom revers'd, and owe their joys to thee;

While

While savage fires, with murdering hands, no more  
 Dread the grim Gods that claim their children's gore;  
 But, sway'd by happier sceptres, here behold  
 The rites of freedom and the shrines of gold. 140  
 Be wise, be mindful of thy realm and throne;  
 Heav'n speed thy labours, and preserve my son!  
 Soon the glad prince, in robes of white array'd,  
 Call'd his attendants, and the fire obey'd.  
 A diamond broad, in burning gold impress'd, 145  
 Fix'd the sun's image on his royal breast;  
 Fair in his hand, appear'd the olive bough,  
 And the white *lantu*\* grac'd his beauteous brow.  
 Swift o'er the hills that lift the walks of day,  
 Thro' parting clouds they took their eastern way; 150  
 Height over height they gain'd, beyond the bound  
 Where the wide empire claims its utmost round;  
 To numerous tribes proclaim'd the solar sway,  
 And held, through various toils, their tedious way.

At length, far distant, thro' the darkening skies, 155  
 Where hills o'er hills in rude disorder rise,  
 A dreadful groan, beneath the struddering ground,  
 Rolls down the steeps and shakes the world around.

\* The *lantu* was a cotton fringe, worn by the Incas, as a badge of royalty.

Columns of reddening smoke, above the height,  
 O'ercaft the heav'ns and cloud their wonted light; 160  
 From tottering tops descend the cliffs of snow,  
 The mountains reel, the valleys rend below,  
 The headlong streams forget their usual round,  
 And shrink and vanish in the gaping ground;  
 The fun descends—Wide flames with livid glare 165  
 Break the red cloud and purple all the air;  
 Above the gaping top, wild cinders driven,  
 Stream high and brighten to the midft of heaven;  
 Deep from beneath, full floods of boiling ore  
 Burft the dread mount, and thro' the opening roar; 170  
 Torrents of molten rocks, on every fide,  
 Lead o'er the fhelves of ice the fiery tide;  
 Hills fide before them,\* furies around them burn,  
 Towns funk beneath, and heaving plains a'erturn;  
 Thro' diftant realms, the flaming deluge hurl'd, 175  
 Sweeps trembling nations from th' aftonifh'd world.

Meanwhile, at diftance, through the livid light,  
 A bufy concourfe met their wondering fight;  
 The prince drew near; where lo! an altar flood,  
 In form a furnace, fill'd with burning wood; 180  
 There a fair youth in pangs expiring lay,  
 And the fond father thus was heard to pray:—

\* Receive,

\* Receive, O dreadful Power, from feeble age,  
 This last pure offering to thy fateless rage ;  
 Thrice has thy vengeance, on this hated land, 185  
 Claim'd a dear infant from my yielding hand ;  
 Thrice have those lovely lips the victim press'd,  
 And all the mother torn that tender breast ;  
 When the dread duty stifled every sigh,  
 And not a tear escap'd her beauteous eye. 190  
 The fourth, and last, now meets the fatal doom,  
 (Groan not, my child, thy God commands thee home)  
 Attend, once more, thou dark, infernal name,  
 From yon far-streaming pyramid of flame ;  
 Snatch, from the heaving flesh, th' expiring breath, 195  
 Sacred to thee and all the powers of death ;  
 Then, in thy hall, with spoils of nations crown'd,  
 Confine thy walks beneath the rending ground ;  
 No more on earth th' embowell'd flames to pour,  
 And scourge my people and my race no more. 200  
 Thus Rocha heard ; and, tow'rd the trembling crowd,  
 Turn'd the bright ensign of his beaming God.

\* It is a fact, that the different tribes of those mountain fa-  
 vages worshipped the various objects of terror that infested the  
 particular parts of the country where they dwelt ; such as storms,  
 volcanoes, rivers, lakes, and several beasts and birds of prey ;  
 and all with this idea, that their forefathers descended from the  
 gods which they worshipped.

Th'

110 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

Th' afflicted chief, with fear and grief oppress'd,  
Beheld the sign, and thus the prince address'd: —  
From what far land, O royal stranger, say, 205  
Ascend thy wandering steps this nightly way?  
Com'st thou from plains like ours, with cinders fir'd?  
And have thy people in the flames expir'd?

Or hast thou now, to stay the whelming flood,  
No son to offer to the furious God? 210

From happier lands I came, the prince return'd,  
Where no red vengeance e'er the concave burn'd;  
No furious God disturbs the peaceful skies,  
Nor yield our hands the bloody sacrifice;  
But life and joy the Power delights to give, 215  
And bids his children but rejoice and live.

Thou seest o'er heav'n the all-delighting sun,  
In living radiance rear his golden throne;  
O'er plains and valleys shed his genial beams,  
Call from yon cliffs of ice the winding streams; 220

While fruits and flowers adorn th' indulgent field,  
And seas and lakes their copious treasures yield,  
He reigns our only God; in him we trace  
The friend, the father of our happy race.

Late the lone tribes, on those delightful shores, 225  
With gloomy reverence serv'd imagin'd powers;

Till

Till he, in pity to the roving race,  
 Dispens'd their laws, and form'd their minds for peace.  
 My heav'n-born parents first the reign began,  
 Sent from his courts to rule the race of man, 230  
 To teach his arts, extend his bounteous sway,  
 And give his blessings where he gives the day.

The wondering chief reply'd : — Thy garb and face  
 Proclaim thy lineage of superior race ;  
 And our far-distant fires, no less than thine, 235  
 Sprang from a God, and own a birth divine.  
 From that tremendous mount, the source of flame,  
 In elder times, my great forefathers came ;  
 Where the dread Power conceals his dark abode,  
 And claims, as now, the tribute of a God. 240  
 This victim due when willing mortals pay,  
 His terrors lessen and his fires decay ;  
 While purer fleet regales th' untainted air,  
 And our glad hosts are fir'd for fiercer war.

Yet know, dread chief, the pious youth rejoin'd, 245  
 One sov'reign Power produc'd all human kind ;  
 Some Sire supreme, whose ever-ruling soul  
 Creates, preserves, and regulates the whole.  
 That Sire supreme must lift his radiant eye  
 Round the wide concave of the boundless sky ; 250  
 That



112 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

That heav'n's high courts, and all the walks of men,  
 May rise unveil'd beneath his careful ken.  
 Could thy dark Power, that holds his drear abode  
 Deep in the bosom of that fiery flood,  
 Yield the glad fruits that distant nations find? 255  
 Or praise, or punish, or behold mankind?  
 When the blest God, from glooms of changing night,  
 Shall gild his chambers with the morning light.  
 By mystic rites he'll vindicate his throne,  
 And own thy servant for his dateous son. 260

Meantime, the chief reply'd, thy cares releas'd,  
 Share the poor relics of our scanty feast;  
 Which, driv'n in hasty rout, our train supply'd,  
 When trembling earth proclaim'd the boiling tide.  
 They far'd; they rested; till approaching morn 265  
 Beheld the day-star o'er the mountain burn;  
 The prince arose, an altar rear'd on high,  
 And watch'd the splendors of the orient sky.

When o'er the mountain flam'd the sun's broad ray,  
 He call'd the host his sacred rites t'essay; 270  
 Then took the loaves of maize, the bounties brake,  
 Gave to the chief and bade them all partake;  
 The hallow'd relics on the pile he plac'd,  
 With tufts of flow'rs the simple offering grac'd,

Held

BOOK THE THIRD.

113

Held to the sun the image from his breast, 275  
 Whose glowing concave all the God exprest;  
 O'er the dry'd leaves the rays concentred fly,  
 And thus his voice ascends the list'ning sky:—

O thou, whose splendors kindle heav'n with fire,  
 Great soul of nature, and the world's dread fire, 280  
 If e'er my father found thy sov'reign grace,  
 Or thy blest will ordain'd the Incan race,  
 Give these lone tribes to learn thine awful name,  
 Receive this offering, and the pile inflame:  
 So shall thy laws o'er these wide bounds be known, 285  
 And earth's unnumber'd sons be happy as thy own.

Thus pray'd the prince: the kindling flames aspire,  
 The tribes surrounding tremble and retire,  
 Gaze on the wonder, full conviction own,  
 And vow obedience to the sacred Sun. 290

The legates now their farther course descry'd,  
 A young cazique attending as a guide,  
 O'er craggy cliffs pursu'd their eastern way,  
 Where loftier champaigns meet the shivering day;  
 Saw timorous tribes, in those sublime abodes, 295  
 Adore the blasts, and turn the storms to gods;  
 While every cloud, that thunders thro' the skies,  
 Claims from their hands a human sacrifice.

H

Awhile

114 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

Awhile the youth, their better faith to gain,  
 Strives, with his usual art, but strives in vain; 300  
 In vain he pleads the mildness of the sun,  
 In those cold bounds where chilling whirlwinds run;  
 Where the dark tempests sweep the world below,  
 And load the mountains with eternal snow.  
 The sun's bright beam, the fearful tribes declare, 305  
 Drives all their evils on the tortur'd air;  
 He draws the vapours up the eastern sky,  
 That sail and centre tow'rd his dazzling eye;  
 Leads the loud storms along his mid-day course,  
 And bids the Andes meet their sweeping force; 310  
 Builds their bleak summits with an icy throne,  
 To shine through heav'n, a semblance of his own;  
 Hence the dire chills the lifted lawns that wait,  
 And all the scourges that attend their state.  
 Sev'n toilsome days, the virt'ous Inca strove, 315  
 To social joys their savage minds to move;  
 Then, while the morning glow'd serenely bright,  
 He led their footsteps to an eastern height;  
 The world, unbounded, stretch'd beneath them, lay,  
 And not a cloud obscur'd the rising day: 320  
 Broad Amazonia, with her star-like streams,  
 In azure drest, a heav'n inverted seems;

Dim

Dim Paraguay extends the aching sight;  
 Xaraya \* glimmers like the moon of night;  
 The earth and skies, in blending borders stray, 325  
 And smile and brighten to the lamp of day.

When thus the prince: — What majesty divine!  
 What robes of gold! what flames around him shine!

There walks the God! his starry sons on high,  
 Draw their dim veil, and shrink behind the sky; 330

Earth with surrounding nature's born a-new,  
 And tribes and empires greet the gladdening view!

Who can behold his all-delighting soul  
 Give life and joy, and heav'n and earth controul,

Bid death and darkness from his presence move— 335  
 Who can behold, and not adore and love?

Those plains, immensely circling, feel his beams,  
 He greens the groves, he silvers o'er the streams,

Swells the wild fruitage, gives the beast his food,  
 And mute creation hails the genial God. 340

But nobler joys his righteous laws impart,  
 To aid the life and mould the social heart,

His peaceful arts o'er happy realms to spread,  
 And altars grace with pure celestial bread;

\* *Xaraya* is a large lake in the country of Paraguay, and is the source of the river Paraguay.

Such our distinguish'd lot, who own his sway, 345  
Mild as his morning stars, and liberal as the day.

His unknown laws, the mountain chief reply'd,  
In your far world your boasted race may guide ;  
And yon low plains, that drink his genial ray,  
At his glad shrine their just devotions pay. 350

But we, nor fear his frown, nor trust his smile ;  
He blasts our forests and o'erturns our toil ;  
Our bowers are bury'd in his whirls of snow,  
Or swept and driv'n to shade his tribes below.  
Ev'n now his mounting steps thy hopes beguile, 355  
He lures thy raptures with a morning smile ;  
But soon (for so those saffron robes proclaim)  
Black storms shall sail beneath his leading flame,  
Thunders and blasts, against the mountains driven,  
Shall shake the tottering tops, and rend the vault of heaven.

He spoke ; they waited, till th' ascending ray,  
High from the noon-tide shot the faithless day ;  
When, lo ! far-gathering, round the eastern skies,  
Solemn and flow, the dark-red vapours rise ;  
Full clouds, convolving on the turbid air, 365  
Move, like an ocean, to the watery war.  
The host, securely rais'd, no dangers harm,  
They sit unclouded, and o'erlook the storm ;

While,

While, far beneath, the sky-borne waters ride,  
 O'er the dark deep and up the mountain's side ; 370  
 The lightning's glancing wings, in fury curl'd,  
 Bend their long forky terrors o'er the world ;  
 Torrents, and broken crags, and floods of rain,  
 From steep to steep roll down their force amain,  
 In dreadful cataracts ; the crashing found 375  
 Fills the wide heav'ns and rocks the smouldering ground.  
 The blasts, unburden'd, take their upward course,  
 And, o'er the mountain top, resume their force :  
 Swift, thro' the long white ridges, from the north,  
 The rapid whirlwinds lead their terrors forth ; 380  
 High rolls the storm, the circling furies rise,  
 And wild gyrations wheel the hovering skies ;  
 Vast hills of snow, in sweeping columns driven,  
 Deluge the air and cloud the face of heaven ;  
 Floods burst their chains, the rocks forget their place, 385  
 And the firm mountain trembles to its base.

Long gaz'd the host ; when thus the stubborn chief,  
 With eyes on fire, and fill'd with fullen grief :—  
 Behold thy careless God, secure on high,  
 Laughs at our woes, and peaceful walks the sky, 390  
 Drives all his evils on these seats sublime,  
 And wafts his favours to a happier clime ;

118 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

Sire of that joyous race thy words disclose,  
 There glads his children, here afflicts his foes.  
 Hence! speed thy course! pursue him where he leads; 395  
 Lest vengeance seize thee for thy father's deeds,  
 Thy immolated limbs assuage the fire  
 Of those curst powers, which now a gift require.

The youth, in haste, collects his scanty train,  
 And, with the sun, flies o'er the western plain, 400  
 The fading orb with plaintive voice he plies,  
 To guide his steps and light him down the skies.  
 So, when the moon and all the host of even,  
 Hang, pale and trembling, on the verge of heaven,  
 While storms, ascending, threat their nightly reign, 405  
 They seek their absent fire, and settle down the main.

Now, to the south he turns; where one vast plain  
 Calls from the hills, a wide-extended train;  
 Of various drefs and various form they show'd;  
 Each wore the ensign of his local god. 410

From eastern steeps, a grisly host descends,  
 O'er whose grim chief a tyger's hide depends:  
 The tusky jaws grin o'er his shaggy brow,  
 The eye-balls glare, the paws depend below;  
 From his bor'd ears contorted serpents hung, 415  
 And drops of gore seem'd rolling on his tongue.

From

From northern wilds dark move the vulture-race ;  
 Black tufts of quills their shaded foreheads grace ;  
 The claws extend, the beak is op'd for blood,  
 And all the armour imitates the god. 420  
 The \* condor, frowning, from a southern plain,  
 Borne on a standard, leads a numerous train :  
 Clench'd in his talons hangs an infant dead,  
 His long beak pointing where the squadrons tread ;  
 His wings, far-stretching, cleave the yielding wind, 425  
 And his broad tail o'er shades the host behind.  
 From other plains, and other hills, afar,  
 The tribes throng dreadful to the promis'd war ;  
 Some wear the crested suries of the snake,  
 Some show the emblems of a stream or lake ; 430  
 All, from the Power they serve, assume their mode,  
 And foam and yell to taste the Incan blood.  
 The prince, incautious, with his train drew near,  
 Known for an Inca by his dress and air,  
 At once the savage bands to vengeance move, 435  
 Demand their arms, and chase them round the grove ;  
 His scattering host in vain the combat tries,  
 While circling thousands from their ambush rise ;

\* The condor is supposed to be the largest bird in the world.  
 His wings, from one extreme to the other, are said to measure  
 twenty feet ; and he is able to carry a child in his clutches.



Nor power to strive, nor hope of flight remains,  
 They bow in silence to the victor's chains. 440

When, now the gathering squadrons throng the plain,  
 And echoing skies the rending shouts retain ;  
 Zamor, the leader of the tyger-band,  
 By choice appointed to the first command,  
 Shrugg'd up his spotted spoils above the rest, 445  
 And, grimly frowning, thus the crowd address'd:—

Warriors, attend ; to-morrow leads abroad  
 Our sacred vengeance for our brothers' blood.  
 On those scorch'd plains for ever must they lie,  
 Their bones still naked to the burning sky ; 450  
 Left in the field for foreign hawks to tear,  
 Nor our own vultures can the banquet share ?  
 But soon, ye mountain gods, yon dreary west  
 Shall fate your vengeance with a nobler feast ;  
 When the proud Sun, that terror of the plain, 455  
 Shall grieve in heav'n for all his children slain ;  
 O'er boundless fields our slaught'ring myriads roam,  
 And your dark powers command a happier home.  
 Meanwhile, ye tribes, these men of solar race,  
 Food for the flames, your bloody rites shall grace : 460  
 Each to a different god his panting breath  
 Relinquish in fire ; this night demands their death :

All

All but the Inca ; him, reserv'd in state ;  
These conquering hands ere long shall immolate,  
To that dread Power that thunders in the skies, 465  
A grateful gift, before his mother's eyes.

The savage ceas'd ; the chiefs of every race  
Lead the bold captives to their destin'd place ;  
The sun descends, the parting day expires,  
And earth and heav'n display their sparkling fires. 470  
Soon the rais'd altars kindle round the gloom,  
And call the victims to the vengeful doom ;  
Led to the pile, in sovereign pomp they tread,  
And sing, by turns, the triumphs of the dead.

Amid the crowd, beside his altar, stood 475  
The youth devoted to the tyger-god :  
A beauteous form he rose, of noble grace,  
The only hope of his illustrious race ;

His aged sire, through numerous years, had shone,  
The first supporter of the Incan throne ; 480

Wife Capac lov'd the youth, and grac'd his hand  
With a fair virgin, from a neighbouring band ;  
And him the royal prince, in equal prime,  
Had chose, t' attend him round the savage clime.

He mounts the pyre ; the flames approach his breath, 485  
And thus he wakes the dauntless song of death :—

O thou dark vault of heaven ! his daily throne,  
 Where flee the absent glories of the sun ?  
 Ye starry hosts, that kindle from his eye,  
 Can you behold him in the western sky ? 490  
 Or if, unseen, beneath his watery bed,  
 The weary'd God reclines his radiant head,  
 When next his morning steps your courts inflame,  
 And seek on earth for young Azonto's name,  
 Then point these ashes, mark the smoky pile, 495  
 And say the hero suffer'd with a smile.  
 So shall th' avenging Power, in fury drest,  
 Bind the red \* circlet o'er his changing vest,  
 Bid dire destruction, on these dark abodes,  
 Whelm the grim tribes and all their savage gods. 500  
 But oh ! forbear to tell my stooping fire,  
 His darling hopes have fed a coward fire :  
 Why should he know the tortures of the brave ?  
 Or fruitless sorrows bend him to the grave ?  
 And may'st thou ne'er be told, my bridal Fair, 505  
 What silent pangs these panting vitals tear ;  
 But, blooming still, th' impatient with employ  
 On the blind hope of future scenes of joy.

\* It is natural for the worshippers of the Sun to consider any change in the atmosphere as indicative of the different passions ascribed to their divinity. With the Peruvians, a sanguine appearance in the Sun denoted his anger.

Now haste, ye strides of death ; the Power of day,  
 In absent slumbers, gives your vengeance way ; 510  
 While fainter light these livid flames supply,  
 And short-liv'd thousands learn of me to die.....

He ceas'd not speaking ; when the yell of war  
 Drowns all their death-songs in a hideous jar ;  
 Round the far-echoing hills the yellings pour, 515  
 And wolves and tygers catch the distant roar.  
 Now more concordant all their voices join,  
 And round the plain they form the festive line ;  
 When, to the music of the dismal din,  
 Indignant Zamor bids the dance begin. 520  
 Dim, thro' the shadowy fires, each changing form  
 Moves like a cloud before an evening storm,  
 When, o'er the moon's pale face and starry plain,  
 The shades of heav'n lead on their broken train ;  
 The mingling tribes their mazy circles tread, 525  
 Till the last groan proclaims the victims dead :  
 Then part the smoky flesh, enjoy the feast,  
 And lose their labours in oblivious rest.

Now, when the western hills proclaim'd the morn,  
 And falling fires were scarcely seen to burn, 530  
 Grimm'd by the horrors of the dreadful night,  
 The hosts woke fiercer for the distant fight ;

And,

And, dark and silent, thro' the frowning grove,  
The different tribes beneath their standards move.

But, round the blissful city of the Sun, 535  
Since the young prince his foreign toils begun,  
The prudent king collected, from afar,  
His martial bands to meet th'expected war.

The various tribes, in one extended train,  
Move to the confines of an eastern plain; 540  
Where, from th'exalted kingdom's utmost end,  
Sublimar hills and savage walks ascend.

High in the front, imperial Capac strode,  
In fair effulgence like the beaming God;  
A golden girdle bound his snowy vest, 545

A mimic sun hung trembling on his breast,  
The lautu's circling band his temples twin'd,  
The bow, the quiver, shade his waist behind;  
Rais'd high in air, his golden sceptre burn'd,  
And hosts surrounding trembled as he turn'd. 550

O'er eastern hills he cast his watchful eye,  
Where op'ning breaches lengthen down the sky;  
In whose blue clefts, wide-sloping alleys bend,  
Where annual floods from melting snows descend;  
Now, dry and deep, far up the dreary height, 555  
Show the dark squadrons moving into fight;

They

They throng and thicken on the smoky air,  
 And every breach pours down the dusky war.  
 So when an hundred streams explore their way,  
 Down the same slopes, convolving to the sea ; 560  
 They boil, they bend, they urge their force amain,  
 Swell o'er obstructing crags, and sweep the distant plain.

Capac beholds, and waits the coming shock,  
 Unmov'd, and gleaming, like an icy rock ;  
 And while for fight the arming hosts prepare, 565  
 Thus thro' the files he breathes the soul of war :—

Ye hosts, of every tribe and every plain,  
 That live and flourish in my father's reign,  
 Long have your flocks and rip'ning harvests shown  
 The genial smiles of his indulgent throne ; 570

As o'er surrounding realms his blessings flow'd,  
 And conquer'd all without the stain of blood.  
 But now behold, yon wide-collecting band,  
 With threat'ning war, demands the happy land :

Beneath the dark, immeasurable host, 575  
 Descending, swarming, how the crags are lost !  
 Already now their ravening eyes behold

Your star-bright temples and your gates of gold ;  
 And to their gods in fancied goblets pour,  
 The warm libation of your children's gore. 580

Move

Move then to vengeance, meet the sons of blood,  
 Led by this arm, and lighted by that God ;  
 The strife is fierce, your fanes and fields the prize,  
 The warrior conquers or the infant dies.

Fill'd with his fire, the hosts, in squar'd array, 585  
 Eye the dark legions and demand th'affray ;  
 Their pointed arrows, rising on the bow,  
 Look up the sky and chide the lagging foe.

Fierce Zamor, frowning, leads the grisly train,  
 Moves from the clefts, and stretches o'er the plain ; 590  
 He gives the shriek ; the deep convulsing sound  
 The hosts re-echo ; and the hills around  
 Retain the rending tumult ; all the air  
 Clangs in the conflict of the clashing war.

But firm, undaunted, as a shelvy strand, 595  
 That meets the surge, the bold Peruvians stand ;  
 With steady aim the founding bow-string ply,  
 And showers of arrows thicken thro' the sky ;  
 When each grim host, in closer conflict join'd,  
 Clench the dire ax, and cast the bow behind ; 600  
 Thro' broken ranks sweep wide the rapid course,  
 Now struggle back, now fidelong sway the force ;  
 Here, from grim chiefs is lopp'd the grisly head ;  
 All gride the dying, all deface the dead ;

There,

There, scattering o'er the field, in thin array, 605  
 Man strives with man, and stones with axes play ;  
 With broken shafts they follow and they fly,  
 And yells, and groans, and shouts invade the sky ;  
 Round all the plains and groves, the ground is strow'd  
 With fever'd limbs and corfes bath'd in blood. 610  
 Long rag'd the strife ; and where, on either side,  
 A friend, a father, or a brother died,  
 No trace remain'd of what he show'd before,  
 Mangled with horrid wounds and smear'd with gore.  
 Now the Peruvians, in collected might, 615  
 With one wide sweep had wing'd the savage flight ;  
 But heaven's bright splendor, in his mid day race,  
 With glooms unufual veil'd his radiant face.  
 By slow degrees a solemn twilight moves,  
 Browns the dim heav'ns and shades the conscions groves. 620  
 Th'observing Inca views, with wild surprife,  
 Deep glooms on earth, no cloud around the skies,  
 His host o'erfhaded in the field of blood,  
 Gor'd by his foes, deserted by his God.  
 All, mute with wonder, ceafe the strife to wage, 625  
 Gaze at each other, and forget their rage ;  
 When pious Capac, to the liftening croud,  
 Rais'd high his wand and pour'd his voice aloud :—



Ye chiefs and warriors of Peruvian race,  
Some dire offence obscures my father's face ; 630

What moves the Godhead to desert the plain,  
Nor fave his children, nor behold them slain ?  
Fly ! speed your course; and seek the friendly town,

Ere darkness shroud you in a deeper frown ;  
The faithful walls your squadrons shall defend, 635  
While my sad steps the sacred dome ascend ;

There learn the cause, and ward the woes we fear—  
Haste, haste, my sons, I guard the flying rear.

The hero spoke ; the trembling tribes obey,  
While deeper glooms obscure the source of day. 640

Sudden, the savage bands collect amain,  
Hang on the rear and sweep them o'er the plain ;  
Their shouts, redoubling o'er the flying war,  
Drown the loud groans and torture all the air ;  
The hawks of heav'n, that o'er the field had stood, 645

Scar'd by the tumult from the scent of blood,  
Cleave the far gloom ; the beasts forget their prey,  
And scour the waste, and give the war its way.

Zamor, elate with horrid joy, beheld  
The sun depart, his children fly the field, 650

And rais'd his rending voice :—Thou darkening sky,  
Deepen thy glooms, the Power of death is nigh ;

Behold

BOOK THE THIRD.

129

Behold him rising from his nightly throne,  
 To veil the heav'ns and drive the conquer'd sun !  
 The glaring Godhead yields to sacred night ; 655  
 And all his armies imitate his flight.  
 O dark, infernal Power, confirm thy reign ;  
 Give deadlier shades, and heap the piles of slain !  
 Soon the young captive Prince shall roll in fire,  
 And all his race accumulate the pyre. 660  
 Ye mountain vultures, here your vengeance pour,  
 Tygers and condors, all ye gods of gore,  
 In these dread fields, beneath your frowning sky,  
 A plenteous feast shall every god supply !—  
 Rush forward, warriors, hide the plains with dead ; 665  
 'Twas here our friends, in former combat, bled ;  
 Strow'd thro' the waste, their naked bones demand  
 This ample vengeance from our conquering hand.

He said ; and, high before the tyger-train,  
 With longer strides, hangs forward o'er the slain, 670  
 Bends, like a falling tree, to reach the foe,  
 And o'er tall Capac aims a deadly blow.  
 The king beheld the ax, and with his wand  
~~Back~~ the rais'd weapon from his grasping hand ;  
 Then clench'd the falling helve, and whirling round, 675  
 Fell'd furious hosts of heroes to the ground :

Nor stay'd, but follow'd, where the squadrons run,  
 Fearing to fight, forsaken by the fun :  
 Till Cusco's walls salute their longing fight,  
 And the wide gates receive their rapid flight. 680  
 The folds are barr'd, the foes, in shade conceal'd,  
 Like howling wolves, rave round th'affrighted field.

The monarch now ascends the sacred dome,  
 Where the fun's image wore a faded gloom.  
 Thro' all the courts a solemn shade prevail'd, 685  
 And female groans his listening ear assail'd;  
 Deep from an inner shrine, the bursting sighs  
 Breathe forth awhile, and these sad accents rise :—  
 Was it for this, my son to distant lands  
 Must trace the wilds, amid those savage bands ? 690  
 And does the God obscure his golden throne,  
 In mournful silence for my slaughter'd son?  
 Oh, had his beam, ere that disastrous day,  
 That snatch'd the youth from these fond arms away,  
 Receiv'd my mounting spirit to the sky, 695  
 That sad Oella might have seen him die !  
 Where slept thy shaft of vengeance, O my God,  
 When those fell tygers drank his sacred blood?  
 Did not the pious prince, with rites divine,  
 Feed the pure flame within thy hallow'd shrine ? 700

And

# BOOK THE THIRD.

131

And early learn, beneath his father's hand,  
 To shed thy blessings round the favour'd land,  
 Form'd by thy laws the royal seat to grace,  
 Son of thy son, and glory of his race?  
 Where, dearest Rocha, rests thy beauteous head? 705  
 Where the rent robes thy hapless mother made?  
 I see thee, mid those hideous hills of snow,  
 Pursu'd and slaughter'd by the savage foe;  
 Or doom'd a feast for some infernal God,  
 Whose horrid shrine demands thy harmless blood. 710  
 Snatch me, O Sun, to happier worlds of light——  
 No, shroud me, shroud me, with thyself in night——  
 Thou hear'st me not; thou dread, departed Power,  
 Thy face is dark, and Rocha is no more.

Thus heard the silent king; his heaving heart 715  
 Caught all her grief, and bore a father's part.  
 The cause, suggested by her tender moan,  
 That veil'd the mid-day splendors of the sun,  
 And shouts insulting of the raging foe,  
 Fix'd him suspense, in all the strength of woe. 720  
 A doubtful moment held his changing choice;  
 Now would he sooth her; half assumes his voice;  
 But greater cares the rising wish controul,  
 And call forth all his dignity of soul.

Why should he cease to ward the coming fate? 729

Or she be told the foes besiege the gate?

He turn'd in haste; and now the image-God,

High in the front, with kindling lustre glow'd:

Swift thro' the portal flew the hero's eye,

And hail'd the growing splendor in the sky. 730

The troops courageous at return of light,

Pour round the dome, impatient for the fight;

The chief, descending, in the portal stood,

And thus address'd the all-delighting God:—

O sovereign soul of heav'n; thy changing face 735

Makes or destroys the glory of thy race.

If, from the bounds of earth, my son be fled,

First of thy line that ever grac'd the dead;

If thy bright Godhead ceas'd in heav'n to burn,

For that lov'd youth, who never must return; 740

Forgive thine armies, when, in fields of blood,

They lose their strength, and fear the frowning God.

As now thy glory, with superior day,

Glow's thro' the field and leads the warrior's way,

May our delighted souls, to vengeance driven, 745

Burn with new brightness in the cause of heaven;

For thy slain son see larger squadrons bleed,

We mourn the hero, but avenge the deed!

He

He said ; and, from the battlements on high,  
 A watchful warrior rais'd an eager cry : 750  
 " An Inca white on yonder altar tied——  
 'Tis Rocha's self—the flame ascends his side.,,  
 In sweeping haste the bursting gates unbar,  
 And flood the champaign with a tide of war ;  
 A cloud of arrows leads the rapid train, 755  
 They shout, they swarm, they hide the moving plain ;  
 The bows and quivers strow the field behind,  
 And the rais'd axes cleave the parting wind ;  
 The prince, confest to every warrior's fight,  
 Inspires each soul and centres all the fight ; 760  
 Each hopes to snatch him from the kindling pyre,  
 Each fears his breath already flits in fire :  
 While Zamor spread his thronging squadrons wide,  
 Wedg'd like a wall—and thus the king defied :—  
 Haste ! son of Light, pour fast the winged war, 765  
 The prince, the dying prince, demands your care ;  
 Hear how his death-song chides your dull delay,  
 Lift larger strides, bend forward to th'affray,  
 Ere folding flames prevent his stifled groan,  
 Child of your beaming God, a victim to our own. 770  
 He said ; and rais'd his shaggy form on high,  
 And bade the shafts glide thicker thro' the sky.

134 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

Like the black billows of the lifted main,  
 Rolls into fight the long Peruvian train ;  
 A white sail, bounding, on the billows tost, 775  
 Is Capac, striding o'er the furious host.  
 Now meet the dreadful chiefs, with eyes on fire ;  
 Beneath their blows the parting ranks retire :  
 In whirlwind-sweep, their meeting axes bound,  
 Wheel, crash in air, and plough the trembling ground ; 780  
 Their sinewy limbs, in fierce contortions, bend,  
 And mutual strokes, with equal force, descend ;  
 The king fways backward from the struggling foe,  
 Collects new strength, and with a circling blow  
 Rush'd furious on ; his flinty edge, on high, 785  
 Met Zamor's helve, and glancing, cleft his thigh.  
 The savage fell ; when, thro' the tyger-train,  
 The driving Inca swept a widening lane ;  
 Whole ranks fall staggering, where he lifts his arm,  
 Or roll before him like a billowy storm ; 790  
 Behind his steps collecting legions close,  
 While, centred in a circling ridge of foes,  
 He drives his furious way ; the prince unties,  
 And thus his voice :—Dread Sovereign of the skies,  
 Accept my living son, again bestow'd, 795  
 To grace with rites the temple of his God !—

Move,

Move, warriors, move, complete the work begun,

Crush the grim race, avenge the injur'd Sun.

The savage host, that view'd the daring deed,

And saw deep squadrons with their leader bleed, 800

Rais'd high the shriek of horror ; all the plain

Is trod with flight and cover'd with the slain.

The bold Peruvians circle round the field,

Confine their flight, and bid the relics yield :

While Capac rais'd his placid voice again— 805

Ye conquering hosts, collect the scatter'd train ;

The Sun commands to stay the rage of war,

He knows to conquer, but he loves to spare.

He coast'd ; and, where the savage leader lay

Went ring in gore, directs his eager way ; 810

Unwraps the tiger's hide, and strives in vain

To close the wound, and mitigate the pain ;

And, while soft pity mov'd his manly breast,

Rais'd the huge head, and thus the chief address'd :—

Too long, dread prince, thy raging arms withstood 815

The hosts of heav'n, and brav'd th' avenging God,

His sovereign will commands all strife to cease,

His realm is concord, and his pleasure, peace ;

This copious carnage, spreading all the plain,

Insults his bounties, but confirms his reign. 820

Enough, 'tis past—thy parting breath demands

The last sad office from my yielding hands.



136 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS;

To share thy pains, and feel thy hopeless woe,  
 Are rites ungrateful to a falling foe;  
 Yet rest in peace; and know, a chief so brave, 825  
 When life departs, shall find an honour'd grave;  
 These hands, in mournful pomp, thy tomb shall rear,  
 And tribes unborn thy hapless fate declare.

Insult me not with tombs; the savage cried,  
 Let closing clods thy coward carcase hide; 830  
 But these brave bones, unbury'd on the plain,  
 Touch not with dust, nor dare with rites profane;  
 Let no curst earth conceal this gory head,  
 Nor songs proclaim the dreadful Zamor dead.  
 Me, whom the hungry gods, from plain to plain, 835  
 Have follow'd, feasting on thy slaughter'd train,  
 Me wouldst thou cover? no! from yonder sky,  
 The wide-beak'd hawk, that now beholds me die,  
 Soon, with his cowering train, my flesh shall tear,  
 And wolves and tygers vindicate their share 840  
 Receive, dread Powers (since I can slay no more)  
 My last glad victim, this devoted gore!

Thus pour'd the vengeful chief his fainting breath,  
 And lost his utterance in the gasp of death.  
 The sad remaining tribes confess the Power, 845  
 That sheds his bounties round the fav'rite shore;  
 All bow obedient to the Incan throne,  
 And blest Oella hails her living son.

THE  
VISION OF COLUMBUS.

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BOOK IV.

## ARGUMENT.

*Destruction of Peru foretold. Grief of Columbus. He is comforted by a promise of a vision of future ages. All Europe appears in vision. Effect of the discovery of America upon the affairs of Europe. Improvement in commerce—government. Revival of learning. Order of the Jesuits. Religious persecution. Character of Raleigh; who plans the settlement of North-America. Formation of the coast by the gulph-stream. Nature of the colonial establishments. Fleets of settlers steering for America.*

T H E  
VISION OF COLUMBUS.

B O O K IV.

**I**N one dark age, beneath a single hand,  
 Thus rose an empire in the savage land.  
 Her golden seats, with following years, increase,  
 Her growing nations spread the walks of peace,  
 Her sacred rites display the purest plan, 5  
 That e'er adorn'd th'unguided mind of man.  
 Yet all the pomp th'extended climes unfold,  
 The fields of verdure and the towers of gold,  
 Those works of peace, and sov'reign scenes of state,  
 In short-liv'd glory hasten to their fate. 10  
 Thy followers, rushing like an angry flood,  
 Shall overwhelm the fields, and stain the shrines in blood;  
 Nor thou, Las Casas,\* best of men, shalt stay  
 The rav'ning legions from their guardless prey.

\* Bartholomew de Las Casas was a Dominican priest, of a most amiable and heroic character. He first went to Hispaniola with Columbus in his second voyage, where he manifested an ardent, but honest zeal, first in attempting to instruct the natives in the principles of the catholic faith, and afterwards in defend-  
ing

## 140 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

Oh! hapless prelate, hero, saint and sage, 15  
 Doom'd with hard guilt a fruitless war to wage,  
 To see, with grief (thy life of virtues run)  
 A realm unpeopled and a world undone!  
 While impious Valverde \*, mock of priesthood stands,  
 Guilt in his heart, the gospel in his hands, 20

ing them against the insufferable cruelties exercised by the Spanish tyrants who succeeded Columbus in the discoveries and conquests in South America. He early declared himself the protector of the Indians; and he devoted himself, ever after, to the most indefatigable labours in their service. He made several voyages to Spain, to solicit, first from Ferdinand, then from cardinal Ximenes, and finally from Charles V, some effectual restrictions against the horrid career of depopulation, which every where attended the Spanish arms. He followed these monsters of cruelty into all the conquered countries; where, by the power of his eloquence and that purity of morals which commands respect even from the worst of men, he doubtless saved the lives of many thousands of innocent people. His life was a continued struggle against that deplorable system of tyranny, of which he gives a description in a treatise addressed to Philip, prince of Spain, entitled *Brevissima relacion dela destruycion delas Indias*.

It is said by the Spanish writers, that the inhabitants of Hispaniola, when first discovered by the Spaniards, amounted to more than one million. This incredible population was reduced, in fifteen years, to sixty thousand souls.

\* Vincent Valverde was a fanatical priest who accompanied Pizarro in his destructive expedition to Peru. If we were to search the history of mankind, we should not find another so extraordinary an example of the united efforts of ecclesiastical hypocrisy and military ferocity, of unresisted murder and insatiable plunder, as we meet with in the account of this expedition.

Father Valverde, in a formal manner, gave the sanction of the church to the treacherous murder of Atabalipa and his relations; which was immediately followed by the destruction and almost entire depopulation of a flourishing empire.

Bids

Bids, in one field, their unarm'd thousands bleed,  
 Smiles o'er the scene and sanctifies the deed.  
 And thou, brave Gasca \*, with thy virtuous train,  
 Shalt lift the sword and urge thy power in vain;  
 Vain the late strife, the sinking land to save,  
 Or call her slaughter'd millions from the grave.

25

The Seraph spoke. Columbus, with a sigh,  
 Cast o'er the hapless climes his moisten'd eye,  
 And thus return'd:—Oh, hide me in the tomb;  
 Why should I live to view th' impending doom?

30

If such dread scenes the scheme of Heav'n compose,  
 And virt'ous toils induce redoubled woes,  
 Unfold no more; but grant a kind release,  
 Give me, 'tis all I ask, to rest in peace.

\* Pedro de la Gasca was one of the few men whose virtues form a singular contrast with the vices which disgraced the age in which he lived, and the country in which he acquired his glory. He was sent over to Peru by Charles V, without any military force, to quell the rebellion of the younger Pizarro, and to prevent a second depopulation, by a civil war, of that country which had just been drenched in the blood of its original inhabitants. He effected this great purpose by the weight only of his personal authority, and the veneration inspired by his virtues. As soon as he had suppressed the rebellion and established the government of the colony, he hastened to resign his authority into the hands of his master; and, though his victories had been obtained in the richest country upon earth, he returned to Spain as poor as Cincinnatus; having resisted every temptation to plunder, and refused any emolument for his services.

Thy

142 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

Thy soul shall rest in peace, the Power' rejoin'd, 35  
 Ere these conflicting shades involve mankind :  
 But nobler views shall first thy mind engage,  
 Where, far advanc'd beyond this darksome age,  
 The happier fruits of thy unwearied care,  
 Thro' future years, a grateful world shall share. 40  
 Europe's contending kings shall soon behold  
 These fertile plains and hills of opening gold ;  
 And in the path of thy advent'rous fail,  
 Their countless navies float in every gale,  
 For wealth and commerce, search the western shore, 45  
 And load the ocean with the shining ore.

As, up the orient heav'n, the dawning ray  
 Smiles o'er the world and gives the promis'd day,  
 Drives fraud and rapine from their nightly spoil,  
 And social nature wakes to peaceful toil ; 50  
 So, from the blazing mine, the golden store  
 Mid warring states shall spread from shore to shore,  
 With new ambition fire their ravish'd eyes,  
 O'er factious nobles bid the monarch rise,  
 Unite the force of realms, the wealth to share, 55  
 Lead larger hosts to milder walks of war ;  
 Wide o'er the world, while genius unconfin'd  
 Tempts happier flights, and opens all the mind,

Dissolves

# BOOK THE FOURTH.

143

Dissolves the slavish bands of monkish lore,  
 Awakes the arts, and bids the Muses soar. 60  
 Then shall thy northern climes their charms display,  
 United nations there commence their sway ;  
 O'er the new world exalt their peerless fame,  
 And pay just tribute to thy deathless name.

Now cast thine eye o'er Europe's various coast ; 65  
 See factions wild their inland booty boast ;  
 The naked harbours, looking to the main,  
 Rear their kind cliffs and break the winds in vain,  
 The lab'ring tide no foreign treasures lade,  
 Nor fails nor cities cast a watery shade ; 70  
 Save, where yon opening gulph the strand divides,  
 Proud Venice bathes her in the broken tides,  
 Beholds her scattering barks around her strown,  
 And, fovereign, deems the watery world her own.

But the firm bondage of the slavish mind 75  
 Spreads deeper glooms, and subjugates mankind ;  
 The zealots fierce, whom local faiths enrage,  
 In causeless strife perpetual combat wage,  
 Support all crimes by full indulgence given,  
 Ufarp the power and wield the sword of Heaven. 80

But lo, where future years their scenes unroll,  
 The rising arts inspire the vent'rous soul.

Behold,



Behold, from all the opening ports of Spain,  
 New fleets ascending on the western main ;  
 From Tagus' banks, from Albion's rocky round, 85  
 Increasing squadrons o'er the billows bound ;  
 Thro' Afric's isles, observe the sweeping sails,  
 Full pinions toffing in Arabian gales ;  
 Indus and Ganges, deep in canvals, loft,  
 And navies crouding round each orient coast ; 90  
 New nations rise, all climes and oceans brave,  
 And shade with sheets th' immeasurable wave  
 See lofty Ximenes, with solemn gait,  
 Move from the cloister to the walks of state,  
 And thro' the wasted realms of factious Spain, 95  
 Curb the fierce lords, and fix the royal reign.  
 Behold, dread Charles th' imperial feat ascends,  
 O'er Europe's climes his conquering arm extends ;  
 While wealthier shores, beneath the western day,  
 Unfold their treasures and enlarge his sway. 100  
 See the brave Francis bear his banners round,  
 To guard the realms and give his rival bound ;  
 With equal zeal for boundless power contend,  
 Of arms the patron, and of arts the friend .  
 And see proud Wolfey rise, securely great, 105  
 Kings at his call, and mitres round him wait ;

From

BOOK THE FOURTH.

145

From monkish walls, the hoards of wealth he draws,  
 To aid the tyrant and restrain the laws,  
 Wakes Albion's genius, abler monarchs braves,  
 And shares with them the empire of the waves. 110  
 Behold dark Solyman, from eastern skies,  
 With his grim host magnificently rise,  
 Extend his limits o'er the Midland sea,  
 And tow'rd Germania drive his conquering way,  
 Frown o'er the Christian powers with haughty air, 115  
 And teach the nations how to lead the war.  
 While powerful Leo wakes a nobler strife,  
 And, generous, calls the finer arts to life ;  
 New walls and structures throng the Latian shore,  
 The Pencil triumphs and the Muses soar. 120  
 Snatch'd from the ground, where Gothic rage had trod,  
 And monks and prelates held their drear abode,  
 The Roman statues rise ; and wake to view  
 The same bold taste their ancient glory knew.  
 O'er the dark world Erasmus casts his eye, 125  
 In schoolmen's lore sees kings and nations lie,  
 With strength of judgment and with fancy warm,  
 Derides their follies, and dissolves the charm,  
 Draws the deep veil, that bigot zeal has thrown  
 O'er pagan books, and science long unknown, 130

From

K

From faith of pageant rites relieves mankind,  
 And seats bold virtue in the conscious mind.  
 But still the daring task, to brave alone  
 The rising vengeance of the papal throne,  
 Restrains his toil : he gives the contest o'er, 135  
 And leaves his hardier sons to meet the threat'ning power.

See Luther rise in yon majestic frame,  
 Fair light of heav'n, and child of deathless fame,  
 Born, like thyself, thro' toils and griefs to wind,  
 From slavery's chains to free the captive mind, 140  
 Brave adverse realms, controul the papal sway,  
 And bring benighted nations into day.

And mark what crowds, his fame around him brings,  
 Schools, synods, prelates, potentates, and kings,  
 All gaining knowledge from his boundless store, 145  
 And join'd to shield him from the rage of power !  
 First of his friends, see \* Frederic's princely form  
 Ward from the sage divine the gathering storm ;  
 In learned Wittemburgh secure his seat,  
 Where arts and virtues find a blest retreat. 150

\* Frederic of Saxony, surnamed *the wise*, was the first sovereign prince who favoured the doctrines of Luther. He became at once his pupil and his patron, defended him from the persecutions of the pope, and gave him an establishment in the university of Wittemburgh.

There

There moves Melanchthon, mild as morning light,  
 And rage and strife are soften'd in his fight ;  
 In terms so gentle flows his tuneful tongue,  
 Ev'n cloister'd bigots join the listening throng ;  
 By foes and infidels he lives approv'd, 155  
 By monarchs courted, \* and by Heav'n below'd.  
 With stern deport, o'er all the circling band,  
 See Ofiander lift his waving hand ;  
 On others' faults he casts a haughty frown,  
 Nor their's will pardon, nor perceive his own ; 160  
 A heart sincere his open looks unfold,  
 In virtue faithful, and in action bold.  
 And lo, where Europe's utmost limits bend,  
 From this mild source what various lights ascend !

\* Francis I, out of respect to the great learning and moderation of Melanchthon, and disregarding the pretended danger of discussing the dogmas of the church, invited him to come to France and establish himself at Paris ; but the intrigues of the cardinal of Tournon prevented the king's intention from taking effect.

If every leader of religious sects had possessed the amiable qualities of Melanchthon, and every monarch who wished to oppose the introduction of new opinions had partook of the wisdom of Francis, the blood of many hundreds of millions of the human species, which has flowed at the shrine of fanaticism, would have been spared. This circumstance alone would have made of human society by this time a state totally different from what it is at present ; and its influence on the progress of improvement in national happiness would have been beyond our calculation.

See haughty Henry, from the papal tie 165  
 His realms dismember, and the power defy ;  
 While Albion's sons disdain a foreign throne,  
 And bravely bound th' oppression of his own.

There starts fierce Loyola, an unknown name,  
 By paths unseen to reach the goal of fame ; 170  
 Thro' courts and camps, by secret skill, to wind,  
 To mine whole states and over-reach mankind.  
 Train'd to his lore, a bold and artful race,  
 Range thro' the world, and every sect embrace,  
 All creeds, and powers, and policies explore, 175  
 Their seats of science raise on every shore,  
 Till a wide empire gains a wondrous birth,  
 Built in all empires o'er the peopled earth.  
 Led by thy followers to the western day,  
 O'er native tribes they form a sov'reign sway, 180  
 Where Paraguay's mild realms their wealth increase,  
 And happy millions learn the arts of peace.

Thus all the race of men, beneath thy view,  
 Improve their state and nobler toils pursue ;  
 Unwonted deeds, in rival greatness, shine, 185  
 Call'd into life, and first inspir'd by thine.  
 So, while imperial Homer tunes the lyre,  
 The living lays unnumber'd bards inspire,

From

# BOOK THE FOURTH.

149

From realm to realm the kindling spirit flies,  
Sounds thro' the earth and echoes to the skies. 190

Now move, in rapid haste, the years of time,  
When, borne afar from Europe's cultur'd clime,  
Thy fav'rite sons shall reach the western strand,  
Where a new empire waits their forming hand.  
To speed their course, the sons of bigot rage, 195

In persecution whelm th' enquiring age;  
Millions of martyr'd heroes mount the pyre,  
And blind devotion lights the sacred fire.  
Led by the dark Inquisitors of Spain,  
See desolation mark her dreary reign ! 200

See Jews and Moors, that crowd the fatal strand,  
Roll in the flames, or flee the hated land !  
See, arm'd with power, the same tribunal rise,  
Where hapless Belgia's fruitful circuit lies;  
What wreaths of smoke roll heavy round the shore ! 205

What shrines and altars flow with Christian gore !  
Where the flames open, lo ! their arms, in vain,  
Reach out for help, distorted with the pain !  
Till, folded in the fires, they disappear,  
And not a sound invades the startled ear. 210

See Philip, thron'd in insolence and pride,  
Enjoy their wailings, and their pangs deride ;

150 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

While, scattering death round Albion's crimson isles,  
O'er the same scenes his cruel confort smiles,  
Amid the strife, a like destruction reigns,  
With wider sweep, o'er Gallia's fatal plains;  
There factious nobles pour the slaughtering tide,  
Grim death unites whom sacred creeds divide;  
Each dreadful victor bids the flames arise,  
And waft a thousand murders to the skies.

Now cease the factions, with the Valois line,  
And the great Bourbon's liberal virtues shine;  
Quell'd by his voice, the furious sects accord,  
And distant empires tremble at his sword,  
Britannia smiling views, with glad surprise,  
A rival reign, in blest Eliza, rise;  
While Belgia's hosts to independence soar,  
And curb the vengeance of th' Iberian power.

Now from all realms, where shaded plains extend,  
See the bent forests to the shores descend.  
From Albion's strand, behold the navies heave,  
Stretch in a line, and thunder o'er the wave;  
There toils brave Howard, master of the main,  
And moves in triumph o'er the force of Spain.

The Seraph spoke; when fair beneath their eye,  
A new-form'd squadron rose along the sky;

BOOK THE FOURTH.

151

High on the tallest deck majestic shone  
 Great Raleigh, pointing tow'rd the western fun ;  
 His eye, bent forward, ardent and sublime,  
 Seem'd piercing nature and evolving time ; 240  
 Beside him stood a globe, whose figures trac'd  
 A future empire in each wilder'd waste ;  
 All former works of men behind him shone,  
 Grav'd by his hand in ever-during stone ;  
 On his mild brow a various crown displays 245  
 The hero's laurel and the scholar's bays ;  
 His graceful limbs in steely mail were drest,  
 The bright star burning on his manly breast ;  
 His sword high-beaming, like a waving spire,  
 Illum'd the shrouds and flash'd the solar fire ; 250  
 The smiling crew rose resolute and brave,  
 And the glad sails hung bounding o'er the wave.

Far on the main they held their rapid flight,  
 And western coasts salute their longing sight :  
 Glad Chesapeak unfolds a passage wide, 255  
 And leads their streamers up the fresh'ning tide ;  
 Where a mild region and delightful soil,  
 And groves and streams, allure the steps of toil.  
 Here, lodg'd in peace, they tread the welcome land,  
 An instant harvest waves beneath their hand, 260



Spontaneous fruits their easy cares beguile,  
And op'ning fields in living culture smile.

With joy Colombus view'd ; when thus his voice :

Ye beauteous shores and generous hosts, rejoice !

Here stretch the water'd plains and midland tide, 265

And nature blooms in all her virgin pride ;

And now the years advance, so long foretold,

When the deep wilds their promis'd change behold,

Be thou, my Seer, the people's guardian friend,

Protect their virtues, and their lives defend ; 270

May wealth and wisdom, with their arts, unfold,

Yet save, oh, save them from the thirst of gold !

May the poor natives, round the guardless climes,

Ne'er feel their rage, nor groan beneath their crimes ;

But learn the various blessings, that extend, 275

Where civil rights and social virtues blend,

In these brave leaders find a welcome guide,

And rear their fanes and empires by their side.

Smile, happy region, smile ; the star of morn

Illumes thy heav'ns, and bids thy day be born ; 280

Thy op'ning forests show the work begun,

Thy plains, unshaded, drink a purer sun ;

Unwonted navies on thy currents glide,

And new-found treasures roll on every tide ;

Yield

BOOK THE FOURTH. 153

Yield now thy bounties, load the distant main, 285  
Give birth to nations, and begin thy reign.

The Hero spoke ; when thus the Power rejoin'd,  
Approv'd his joy, and feasted still his mind :—  
To thy warm wish, beneath these opening skies,  
The pride of earth-born empires soon shall rise. 290  
My powerful arm, to which the task was given,  
On this fair globe to work the will of Heaven,  
To rear the mountain, spread the subject plain,  
Lead the long stream, and roll the billowy main,  
In every clime prepar'd the seats of state, 295  
Design'd their limits and prescrib'd their date.  
To meet these tides, I stretch'd the level strand,  
Heav'd the green banks, and taught the groves to stand,  
Strow'd the wild fruitage, gave the beasts their place,  
And form'd the region for thy kindred race. 300  
At nature's birth when first the watery round,  
And solid lands their blending borders found ;  
Back to those distant hills, whose vapour shrouds,  
A rock-rais'd world in Alleganian clouds,  
Th'Atlantic wave its coral kingdoms spread, 305  
And scaly nations here their gambols led.  
By slow degrees, thro' following years of time,  
I bar'd these realms \* and rais'd the sedgy clime ;

\* Among the various mutations, which appear to have taken place in different parts of the earth, the formation of the coast  
of

As, from retiring seas, the rising sand  
 Stole into light, and gently drew to land. 310

Mov'd by the winds, that sweep the flaming zone,  
 The waves roll westward with the constant fun,  
 Meet the firm Isthmus, scoop that gulphy bed,  
 Whe el tow'rd the north, and here their currents spread.  
 Those rav'g'd banks, that move beneath their force, 315  
 Borne on the tide and lost along the course,  
 Have form'd this beauteous shore, by Heav'n design'd  
 The happiest empire that awaits mankind.

Think not the lust of gold shall here annoy,  
 Enslave the nations, and the race destroy. 320  
 No useless mine these northern hills enclose,  
 No ruby ripens, and no diamond glows ;

of North-America by the gulph-stream, is one of the most remarkable. The rising of sand-banks, which are perpetually increasing along the shores of Virginia and the Carolinas—the layers of sea-shells and pieces of wood, which are found at the depth of forty or fifty feet below the surface, at the distance of a hundred miles from the sea, in the middle and southern States—the level and uniform appearance of the country, from New-Jersey to East-Florida—and the vast cavity which appears to have been scooped out of the earth, to form the gulph of Mexico, are circumstances which establish the above as an undoubted fact. It is evident, that, not only the island of Newfoundland, Cape-Cod, &c. but the greater part of the settled country, from the river Delaware to Cape St. Augustine, is an accretion of earth, worn off from the Isthmus of Darien, and brought hither by that strong current of water which follows the trade winds ; and, which, meeting the obstruction of the Isthmus, takes a northern direction, and sweeps the coast as far as the river St. Laurence.

But

BOOK THE FOURTH.

155

But richer stores, and rocks of useful mould,  
 Repay, in wealth, the penury of gold.  
 Freedom's unconquer'd sons, with healthy toil, 325  
 Shall lop the grove, and warm the furrow'd foil,  
 From iron ridges break the rugged ore,  
 And plant with men the man-enobling shore ;  
 While fails, and towers, and temples round them heave,  
 Shine o'er the realms, and shade the distant wave. 330  
 Nor think the native tribes, these wilds that trace,  
 A foe shall find in this exalted race ;  
 In souls like theirs, no mean ungenerous aim  
 Can shade their glories with the deeds of shame ;  
 Nor low deceit, weak mortals to ensnare, 335  
 Nor bigot zeal to urge the barb'rous war.  
 From eastern tyrants driv'n, and nobly brave,  
 To build new states, or seek a distant grave,  
 The generous host with proffer'd leagues of peace,  
 Approach these climes, and hail the savage race ; 340  
 Pay the just purchase for th'uncultur'd shore,  
 Diffuse their arts, and share the friendly power ;  
 While the dark tribes in social aid combine,  
 Exchange their treasures and their joys refine.  
 O'er Europe's wilds, when first the nations spread, 345  
 The pride of conquest every legion led.

Each

156 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

Each powerful chief, by servile crowds ador'd,  
 O'er conquer'd realms assum'd the name of lord,  
 Built the proud castle, rang'd the savage wood,  
 Fir'd his grim host to frequent fields of blood, 350  
 With new-made honours lur'd his subject bands,  
 Price of their lives, and purchase of their lands ;  
 For names and titles bade the world resign  
 Their faith, their freedom, and their rights divine.

Thus haughty baronies their terrors spread, 355  
 And slavery follow'd where the standard led ;  
 Till, little tyrants by the great o'erthrown,  
 Contending nobles give the regal crown ;  
 Wealth, wisdom, virtue, every claim of man,  
 Unguarded fall to form the finish'd plan : 360  
 Ambitious cares, that nature never gave,  
 Warm the starv'd peasant, fire the sceptred slave ;  
 Thro' all degrees, in gradual pomp, ascend,  
 Honour, the name, and Tyranny, the end.

But nobler honours here the breast inflame ; 365  
 Sublimar views, and deeds of happier fame ;  
 A new creation waits the western shore,  
 And reason triumphs o'er the pride of power.  
 Thy free-born sons, with genius unconfin'd,  
 Nor sloth can poison, nor a tyrant bind, 370  
 With

With self-wrought fame and worth internal blest,  
 No venal star shall brighten on their breast ;  
 No king-created name or courtly art  
 Damp the bold thought, or sway the changing heart.  
 Above all fraud, beyond all titles great, 375  
 Heav'n in their soul, and sceptres at their feet,  
 Like fires of unborn realms, they move sublime,  
 Look empires thro', and pierce the veil of time,  
 Hold o'er the world, that men may choose from far  
 The palm of peace, or scourge of barb'rous war ; 380  
 Till arts and laws in one great system bind,  
 By leagues of peace, the labours of mankind.

But slow proceeds the plan. Long toils remain,  
 Ere thy blest children can begin their reign.  
 That daring leader, whose exalted soul 385  
 Pervades all scenes that future years unroll,  
 Must yield the palm ; and at a courtier's shrine,  
 His fame, his freedom, and his life resign.  
 That feeble train, the lonely wilds who tread,  
 Their fire, their genius, in their Raleigh dead, 390  
 Shall pine and perish in the frowning gloom,  
 Or mount the wave and seek their ancient home.  
 Succeeding hosts in vain the task pursue,  
 The dangers tempt, and all the strife renew ;

While

158 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

While kings and courtiers still neglect the plan, 395  
The slaves of ease and enemies of man.

At last brave Delaware his hardy host  
Leads in full triumph to the well-known coast,  
Aids with a liberal hand the patriot cause,  
Begins the culture, and designs their laws ; 400  
Till o'er Virginia's plains they fix their sway,  
And spread their hamlets tow'rd the setting day.

While impious Laud, on England's wasted shore,  
Renews the flames that Mary rear'd before,  
Unnumber'd sects his swollen fury fly, 405  
To seek new seats beneath another sky ;  
Where faith and freedom spread th'alluring charm,  
And toils and dangers every bosom warm.  
Amid th'unconquer'd, venerable train,  
Whom tyrants press and seas oppose in vain, 410  
See virtuous Baltimore ascend the wave,  
See heav'n-taught Penn its unknown terrors brave,  
Sweets, Belgians, Gauls, their various flags display,  
Full pinions crowding on the watery way ;  
All from their diff'rent shores, their sails unfurl'd, 415  
Point their glad streamers to the western world

THE

THE  
VISION OF COLUMBUS.

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BOOK V.



## ARGUMENT.

*Vision confined to North America. Progress of the settlements. General invasion of the natives. Their defeat. Settlement of Canada. Invasion of the French. Braddock's defeat. Washington saves the English army. Actions of Abercrombie, Amherst, and Wolfe. Peace. Darknefs overshades the continent. Apprehensions of Columbus from that appearance. Cause explained. Cloud bursts away in the centre. View of Congress. Invasion of the English. Conflagration of towns, from Falmouth to Norfolk. Battle of Bunker-hill, viewed through the smoke. American army assembles. Speech of Washington. Actions and death of Montgomery. Actions of Washington. Approach and capture of Burgoyne.*

Deep o'er the concave heavy wreaths are roll'd,  
 And midland towns and distant groves infold.  
 Thro' the dark curls of smoke the winged fires  
 Climb in tall pyramids above the spires; 380  
 Cinders, high-failing, kindle heav'n around,  
 And falling structures shake the smouldering ground.

Now, where the sheeted flames thro' Charlestown roar,  
 And lashing waves hiss round the burning shore,  
 Thro' the deep folding fires, dread Bunker's height 385  
 Thunders o'er all and shows a field of fight.  
 Like shad'wy phantoms in an evening grove,  
 To the dark strife the closing squadrons move;  
 They join, they break, they thicken thro' the air,  
 And blazing batteries burst along the war; 390  
 Now, wrapp'd in reddening smoke, now dim in fight,  
 They sweep the hill or wing the downward flight;  
 Here, wheel'd and wedg'd, Britannia's veterans turn,  
 And the long lightnings from their musquets burn;  
 There scattering strive the thin colonial train, 395  
 And broken squadrons still the field maintain;  
 Britons in fresh battalions rise the height,  
 And, with increasing volleys, give the fight.  
 Till, smear'd with clouds of dust, and bath'd in gore,  
 As growing foes their rais'd artillery pour, 400

178 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

Columbia's host moves o'er the field afar,  
 And faves, by slow retreat, the sad remains of war.  
 There strides bold Putnam, and from all the plains  
 Calls the tir'd troops, the tardy rear sustains,  
 And, mid the whizzing deaths that fill the air, 405  
 Waves back his sword and dares the foll'wing war.

Thro' falling fires, Columbus sees remain  
 Half of each host in heaps promiscuous slain ;  
 While dying crowds the lingering life-blood pour,  
 And slippery steeps are trod with prints of gore. 410  
 There, glorious Warren ! thy cold earth was seen,  
 There spring thy laurels in immortal green ;  
 Dearest of chiefs, that ever press'd the plain,  
 In freedom's cause, with early honours, slain,  
 Still dear in death, as when, in fight you mov'd, 415  
 By hosts applauded, and by Heav'n approv'd ;  
 The faithful Muse shall tell the world thy fame,  
 And unborn realms resound th' immortal name.

Now, from all plains, as smoky wreaths decay,  
 The free-born myriads started into day ; 420  
 Tall, thro' the lessening shadows, half conceal'd,  
 They throng and gather in a central field ;  
 There, stretch'd immense, their uniform'd squadrons stand,  
 Eye the strong foe, and eager strife demand.

In

In front great Washington exalted shone, 425  
His eye directed tow'rd the half-seen sun ;  
As thro' the mist the bursting splendors glow,  
And light the passage to the distant foe.  
His waving steel returns the living day,  
Clears the broad plains, and marks the warrior's way ; 430  
The forming columns range in order bright,  
And move impatient for the promis'd fight.

When great Columbus saw the chief arise,  
And his bold blade cast lightning on the skies,  
He trac'd the form that met his view before, 435  
On drear Ohio's desolated shore.  
Matur'd with years, with nobler glory warm,  
Fate in his eye, and vengeance on his arm,  
The great Observer here with joy beheld  
The hero moving in a broader field. 440

There rose brave Greene, in all the strength of arms,  
Unmov'd and brightening as the danger warms ;  
In counsel great, in every science skill'd,  
Pride of the camp and terror of the field.  
With eager look, conspicuous o'er the crowd, 445  
The daring port of great Montgomery strode ;  
Bar'd the bright blade, with honour's call elate,  
Claim'd the first field, and hasten'd to his fate.

Calm Lincoln next, with unaffected mien,  
 In dangers daring, active and serene, 450  
 Careless of pomp, with steady greatness shone,  
 Sparing of others' blood and liberal of his own.  
 Heath, for th' impending strife, his falchion draws;  
 And fearless Wooster aids the sacred cause.  
 Mercer advanc'd, an early fate to prove, 455  
 And Wayne and Mifflin swift to combat move.  
 There stood stern Putnam, seam'd with many a scar,  
 The veteran honours of an earlier war;  
 Undaunted Stirling, dreadful to his foes,  
 And Gates and Sullivan to vengeance rose; 460  
 While brave M'Dougall, steady and sedate,  
 Stretch'd the nerv'd arm to ope the scene of fate.  
 Howe mov'd with rapture to the toils of fame,  
 Laurens adorn'd a father's honour'd name;  
 Parsons and Smallwood lead their daring bands, 465  
 St. Clair alert in front of thousands stands.  
 There gallant Knox his moving engines brings,  
 Mounted and grav'd, \* *the last resort of kings*;

\* *Ultima ratio regum*; a device of Louis XIV, engraved on his ordnance. The same device has since been adopted by other nations. Many pieces of foreign cannon, used in America in the course of former wars, had been left in the country at the conclusion of the last peace. These composed the American artillery

The long black rows in dreadful order wait,  
 Their grim jaws gaping, soon to utter fate ; 470  
 When, at his word, the red-wing'd clouds shall rise,  
 And the deep thunders rock the shores and skies.  
 Beneath a waving sword, in blooming prime,  
 Fayette moves graceful, ardent and sublime ;  
 In foreign guise, in freedom's noble cause, 475  
 His untry'd blade the youthful hero draws ;  
 On the great chief his eyes in transport roll,  
 And fame and Washington inspire his soul.  
 Steuben 'advanc'd, in veteran armour drest,  
 For Prussian lore distinguish'd o'er the rest ; 480  
 From rank to rank, in eager haste, he flew,  
 And marshall'd hosts in dread arrangement drew.  
 Wadsworth, to aid their generous ardour, stood,  
 The friend, the patron of the brave and good.  
 While other chiefs and heirs of deathless fame 485  
 Rise into fight, and equal honours claim ;  
 But who can tell the dew-drops of the morn ?  
 Or count the rays that in the diamond burn ?

Now, the broad field as untry'd warriors shade,  
 The sun's glad beam their shining ranks display'd ; 490

artillery at the commencement of the war of Independence;  
 which accounts for the circumstance of this device being found  
 on the cannon of a republican army.

The glorious Leader wav'd his glittering steel,  
 Bade the long train in circling order wheel ;  
 And, while the banner'd hoft around him prefs'd,  
 With patriot ardour thus the ranks address'd:—

Ye generous bands, behold the task to fave, . 495  
 Or yield whole nations to an infant grave.  
 See headlong myriads crowding to your fhore,  
 Hear, from all ports, their boasted thunders roar ;  
 From Charlestown-heights their bloody ftandards play,  
 O'er far Champlain they lead their northern way, 500  
 Virginian banks behold their ftreamers glide,  
 And hostile navies load each fouthern tide.  
 Beneath their fteps your towns in afhes lie,  
 Your inland empires feaft their greedy eye ;  
 Soon fhall your fields to lordly parks be turn'd; 505  
 Your children butcher'd, and your villas burn'd;  
 While following millions, thro' the reign of time,  
 Who claim their birth in this indulgent clime,  
 Bend the weak knee, to fervile toils confign'd,  
 And floth and flavery overwhelm mankind. 510  
 Rife then to war, to noble vengeance rife,  
 Ere the grey fire, the helpiefs infant dies ;  
 Look thro' the world where endlefs years defcend,  
 What realms, what ages on your arms depend !

Reverse

Reverse the fate, avenge th' insulted sky ; 515

Move to the strife—we conquer or we die.

So spoke the chief ; and with his guiding hand

Points the quick toil to each surrounding band.

At once the different lines are wheel'd afar,

In different realms, to meet the gathering war. 520

With his young host Montgomery issues forth,

And lights his passage thro' the dusky north ;

O'er streams and lakes his conqu'ring banners play,

Navies and forts, surrend'ring, mark his way ;

Thro' desert wilds, o'er rocks and fens, they go, 525

And hills before them lose their crags in snow ;

Unbounded toils they brave ; when rise in fight

Quebec's dread walls, and Wolfe's still cheerless height ;

With skillful glance he eyes the turrets round,

Bristled with pikes, with dark artillery crown'd, 530

Resolves with naked steel to scale the towers,

And snatch a realm from Britain's hostile powers.

Now drear December's boreal blasts arise,

A roaring hail-storm swept the shuddering skies,

Night with condensing horrors shrouded all, 535

And trembling watch-lights glimmer'd from the wall.

He points th' assault, and thro' the howling air,

O'er rocky ramparts leads the dreadful war.



Swift rise the rapid host ; the walls are red  
 With flashing flames ; down roll the heaps of dead. 540  
 Till back recoiling from the ranks of slain,  
 They leave their leader with a feeble train,  
 Begirt with foes within the sounding wall,  
 While round his arm successive Britons fall ;  
 But short the strife ; new squadrons gather'd round, 545  
 And brave Montgomery press the gory ground.  
 Another Wolfe Columbus here beheld,  
 In youthful charms, a soul undaunted yield ;  
 While lost, o'erpower'd, his hardy host remains,  
 Stretch'd by his side, or led in captive chains. 550

And now the Angel turn'd the Hero's eye,  
 To other realms, where other standards fly ;  
 Where Washington amid surrounding foes,  
 Still greater rises as the danger grows ;  
 And wearied ranks, o'er weltring warriors slain, 555  
 Attend his course thro' many a crimson'd plain.  
 From Hudson's banks to Trenton's dreary strand,  
 He guards in firm retreat his feeble band ;  
 While countless foes with British Howe advance,  
 Bend o'er his rear, and point the lifted lance ; 560  
 O'er Del'ware's frozen wave, with scanty force,  
 He lifts the sword, and points the backward course,

Wings

Wings the dire vengeance on the shouting train,  
 And leads whole squadrons in the captive chain ;  
 Where vaunting foes to half their numbers yield, 565  
 Tread back the flight, or press the fatal field.  
 'Twas there in furious strife, brave Mercer strode,  
 And seal'd the vict'ry with his streaming blood.

Where the broad Laurence mingles with the main,  
 Rose into fight a wide extended train : 570  
 From shore to shore, along th' unfolding skies,  
 Beneath full sails, imbanding nations rise ;  
 Britain and Brunswick here their flags unfold ;  
 Here Hestia's hordes, for toils of slaughter fold,  
 Hibernian hosts and Hanoverian slaves, 575  
 Move o'er the decks and shade the conscious waves.  
 Tall, on the boldest bark, superior shone,  
 A warrior, ensign'd with a various crown ;  
 Myrtles and laurels equal honours join'd,  
 Which arms had purchas'd and the Muses twin'd ; 580  
 His sword wav'd forward, and his ardent eye  
 Seem'd sharing empires in the southern sky.  
 Beside him rose a herald, to proclaim  
 His various honours, titles, feats, and fame ;  
 Who rais'd an op'ning scroll, where proudly shone 585  
*Burgoyne and vengeance from the British throne.*

Champlain



THE  
VISION OF COLUMBUS.

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BOOK VI.

## ARGUMENT.

*Coast of France rises in Vision. Louis, to humble the British power, forms an alliance with the American states. This brings France, Spain, and Holland into the war, and rouses Hyder Ally to attack the English in India. The Vision returns to America, where the military operations continue with various success. Battle of Monmouth. Actions of Lincoln. Movements of Cornwallis. Actions of Greene. French army arrives, and joins the American. They march and besiege the English army under Cornwallis in York-town. Naval action of De Grasse and Graves. Capture of the English army.*

THE  
VISION OF COLUMBUS.

BOOK VI.

**T**HUS view'd the Sage ; when, lo, in eastern skies,  
 From glooms unfolding Gallia's coasts arise.  
 Bright o'er the scenes of state a golden throne,  
 Instarr'd with gems and hung with purple, shone ;  
 Young Bourbon there in sovereign splendor fate, 5  
 And fleets and moving armies round him wait.  
 For now the contest, with increas'd alarms,  
 Fill'd every clime, and rous'd the world to arms ;  
 While Heav'n's high will, that light from darkness brings,  
 And good to nations from the scourge of kings, 10  
 In this dread hour bade all the plan unfold,  
 And the new world illuminate the old.

Thro' Europe's realms unnumber'd sages trace  
 Th' expanding dawn that waits the reas'ning race ;  
 O'er western climes they turn their ardent eyes, 15  
 Thro' glorious toils where struggling nations rise ;

Where

Where each firm deed, each new illustrious name  
Calls into light a field of nobler fame.

They mark beyond, thro' wilder'd walks of day,  
Where absent suns their unknown beams display, 20  
What fires of unborn nations claim their birth,  
And ask their empires in that waste of earth.  
While o'er the eastern world, with painful eye,  
In slavery sunk they see the kingdoms lie,  
Whole realms exhausted to enrich a throne, 25  
Their fruits untasted, and their rights unknown ;  
Thro' tears of grief that speak the melting mind,  
They hail the era that relieves mankind.

Of these the first, the Gallic sages stand,  
And urge their king to lift an aiding hand. 30  
The generous cause their glowing breasts inspir'd,  
Columbia's wrongs their indignation fir'd ;  
To share her glorious toils their counsel mov'd,  
In justice founded and by faith approv'd.  
Surrounding heroes wait the monarch's word, 35  
In foreign fields to draw the glittering sword,  
Prepar'd with joy to join those infant powers,  
Who build new empires on the western shores.

By honest guile the royal ear they bend,  
And lure him on, fair freedom to defend ; 40  
That

That, once recognis'd, once establish'd there,  
 The world might learn the proffer'd boon to share;  
 While artful arguments the plan disguise,  
 Garb'd in the gloss that suits a monarch's eyes.

By arms to humble Britain's haughty power, 45  
 From her to sever that extended shore,  
 Contents his utmost wish. For this he lends  
 His powerful aid, and calls th' oppress'd his friends.  
 The league propos'd, he lifts his arm to save,  
 And speaks the borrow'd language of the brave: 50

Ye states of France, and ye of rising name,  
 Who work those distant miracles of fame,  
 Hear and attend; let heav'n the witness bear,  
 We draw the sword, we aid the righteous war.  
 Let leagues eternal bind each friendly land, 55  
 Giv'n by our voice, and 'stablish'd by our hand;  
 Let yon extensive empire fix her sway,  
 And spread her blessings with the bounds of day.  
 Yet know, ye nations, hear, ye Powers above,  
 Our purpos'd aid no views of conquest move; 60  
 In that vast world revives no ancient claim  
 Of regions peopled by the Gallic name;  
 Our envied bounds, already stretch'd afar,  
 Nor ask the sword, nor fear the rage of war;

N

But



192 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

Where each firm deed, each new illustrious name  
Calls into light a field of nobler fame.

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 The world might learn the proffer'd boon to share;  
 While artful arguments the plan disguise,  
 Garb'd in the gloss that suits a monarch's eyes.

By arms to humble Britain's haughty power, 45  
 From her to sever that extended shore,  
 Contents his utmost wish. For this he lends  
 His powerful aid, and calls th' oppress'd his friends.  
 The league propos'd, he lifts his arm to save;  
 And speaks the borrow'd language of the brave: 50

Ye states of France, and ye of rising name,  
 Who work those distant miracles of fame,  
 Hear and attend; let heav'n the witness bear,  
 We draw the sword, we aid the righteous war.  
 Let leagues eternal bind each friendly land, 55  
 Giv'n by our voice, and 'stablish'd by our hand;  
 Let yon extensive empire fix her sway,  
 And spread her blessings with the bounds of day.  
 Yet know, ye nations, hear, ye Powers above,  
 Our purpos'd aid no views of conquest move; 60  
 In that vast world revives no ancient claim  
 Of regions peopled by the Gallic name;  
 Our envied bounds, already stretch'd afar,  
 Nor ask the sword, nor fear the rage of war;

N

But

But virtue, struggling with the vengeful Power, 65  
 That stains yon fields, and desolates that shore,  
 With nature's foes bids former compact cease;  
 We war reluctant, and our wish is peace;  
 To suffering nations be the succour given,  
 The cause of nations is the cause of Heaven. 70

He spoke; his moving armies shade the plain,  
 His fleets rode bounding on the western main;  
 O'er lands and seas the loud applauses rung,  
 And war and union dwelt on every tongue.

The other Bourbon caught the splendid strain, 75  
 And rous'd in haste the naval force of Spain.  
 Swift o'er the tide, where Gallic flags advance,  
 He bids his own in wonted union dance;  
 And while dread Elliott shakes the Midland wave,  
 They strive in vain the Calpian rock to brave. 80  
 The Belgian powers with equal speed prepare  
 Thro' western isles to meet the watery war;  
 Where still proud Albion sweeps the shuddering main,  
 And foils the force of Holland, France and Spain.

Where Indian borders skirt the orient skies, 85  
 To furious strife unwonted myriads rise;  
 Great Hyder there, unconquerably bold,  
 Bids vengeance move and freedom's flag unfold,

Fires

Fires the wide realms t'affert their ancient sway,  
And scourge fierce Britons from their lawless prey. 90

Now Europe's northern powers, their counsels blend,  
The laws of trade to soften and extend ;  
An arm'd Neutrality the way prepares,  
To check the horrors of all future wars ;  
Till by degrees the wasting sword shall cease, 95  
And commerce lead to universal peace.

Thus all the ancient world with ardent eyes  
Enjoy the lights that gild th' Atlantic skies,  
Wake to new life, assume a borrow'd flame,  
Enlarge the lustre and partake the fame. 100  
So mounts of ice, that polar heav'ns invade,  
Unheeded stand beneath the night's long shade,  
Yet when the morning lights their glaring throne,  
Give back the day, and imitate the sun.

But still Columbus, o'er the western shore, 105  
Sees Albion's fleets her new battalions pour ;  
The realms unconquer'd still their terrors wield,  
And stain with mingled gore th' embattled field.  
O'er Schuylkill's wave to various fight they move,  
And adverse nations equal slaughter prove ; 110  
Till, where dread Monmouth lifts a frowning height,  
Parading armies cast a glaring light.

There strode the British Clinton o'er the field,  
 And marshall'd hosts for ready combat held.  
 As the dim sun, beneath the skirts of even, 115  
 Crimsons the clouds that sail the western heaven;  
 So, in red wavy rows, where spread the train  
 Of men and standards, shone the fateful plain.

But now dread Washington arose in fight,  
 And the long ranks roll forward to the fight; 120  
 He points the charge, the mounted thunders roar,  
 And plough the plain, and rock the distant shore.  
 Above the folds of smoke, that veil'd the war,  
 His guiding sword illum'd the fields of air;  
 The vollied flames, that burst along the plain, 125  
 Break the deep clouds, and show the piles of slain;  
 Till flight begins; the smoke is roll'd away,  
 And the red standards open into day.  
 Britons and Germans hurry from the field,  
 Now wrapp'd in dust, and now to fight reveal'd; 130  
 Behind, great Washington his falchion drives,  
 Thins the pale ranks, and copious vengeance gives.  
 Hosts captive bow, and move behind his arm,  
 And hosts before him wing the driven storm;  
 When the glad shore salutes their fainting fight, 135  
 And thundering navies screen their rapid flight.

Thro'

Thro' plains of death, that gleam with hostile fires,  
 Brave Lincoln now to southern climes retires ;  
 Where o'er her streams beleagur'd Charleston rose,  
 The hero moves to meet th' assembled foes. 140

Around the pointed strand, on either flood,  
 Red standards wav'd and floating batteries rode ;  
 While, braving death, his scanty host remains,  
 And the dread strife with various fate sustains.

High from the sable decks the bursting fires      • 145  
 Sweep the full streets, and cleave the glittering spires.

The flying flames, that vault the burning air  
 Strow their crackt shells and pour th' etherial war ;  
 And all the tented plain, where heroes tread,  
 Is torn with crags and cover'd with the dead. 150

Each shower of flames renews the townsmen's woe,  
 They wail the strife, they dread th' infuriate foe.

Th' afflicted Fair, while tears bedew their charms,  
 Babes at their side and infants in their arms,  
 With piercing shrieks his guardian hand implore, 155

To save them trembling from the victor's power.

He shares their anguish with a moist'ning eye,

And bids the balls rain thicker thro' the sky ;

But vain the strife ; while crowding to the shore,

The foes in fresh battalions round him pour. 160

198 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

He yields at last the long-contested prize,  
And freedom's banners quit the southern skies.

The conqu'ring legions now the champaign tread,  
And tow'rd the north their fire and slaughter spread ;  
Thro' towns and realms, where arming peasants fly, 165  
The bold Cornwallis bears his standard high ;  
O'er many a field displays his wasting force,  
And thousands fall, and thousands aid his course ;  
While in his march thro' all the wide domain,  
Colonial dastards join his splendid train. 170

So mountain streams o'er climes of melting snow,  
Spread with increasing waves, and flood the world below.

The great Columbus, with an anxious sigh,  
Saw British ensigns reaching round the sky,  
Saw desolation whelm his fav'rite coast, 175  
His children scatter'd, and their vigour lost,  
De Kalb in furious combat presses the plain,  
Morgan and Smallwood various shocks sustain ;  
When Greene, in lonely greatness, rose to view,  
A few firm patriots to his standard drew ; 180  
And, moving stately to a rising ground,  
Bade the loud trumpet to speedy vengeance sound ;  
Fir'd by the voice, new squadrons, from afar,  
Crowd to the hero and demand the war.

Round

BOOK THE SIXTH.

199

Round all the shores and plains he turn'd his eye,  
Saw forts arise, and conquering banners fly :  
The saddening scene suspends his ardent soul,  
And fates of empires in his bosom roll.  
With slender force where should he lift the steel,  
While hostings foes immeasurably wheel ?  
Or how behold the boundless slaughter spread,  
Himself stand idle and his country bleed ?

185

190

A silent moment thus the hero stood,  
And held his warriors from the field of blood ;  
Then points the British legions where to roll,  
Marks out their progress, and designs the whole.  
He lures their chief, o'er yielding realms to roam,  
To build his greatness, and to find his doom ;  
With gain and grandeur feeds his fateless flame,  
And leaves the vict'ry to a nobler name ;  
Gives to great Washington, to meet his way,  
Nor claims the glories of so bright a day.

195

200

Then to the conquer'd south, with gathering force,  
O'er sanguine plains he shapes his rapid course ;  
Forts fall around him, hosts before him fly,  
And captive bands his growing train supply.  
At length, far spreading thro' a fatal field,  
Britannia's chiefs their circling armies wheel'd ;

205



Near Eutaw's fount, where, long renown'd for blood,  
 Pillars of ancient fame in triumph stood, 210  
 The ready squadrons, rang'd in order bright,  
 Stand, like a fiery wall, and wait the shock of fight.

When o'er the neighb'ring hill, brave Greene arose,  
 Ey'd the far plain, and view'd the glittering foes;  
 Dispos'd for combat each compacted train, 215  
 To lead the charge, or the wide wings sustain,  
 Rous'd all their rage, superior force to prove,  
 Wav'd the bright blade, and bade the onset move.  
 As hovering clouds, when morning beams arise,  
 Hang their red curtains round the eastern skies, 220  
 Unfold a space to hail the promis'd sun,  
 And catch their splendors from his rising throne;  
 Thus glow'd th' approaching fronts, whose steely glare  
 Glanc'd o'er the hideous interval of war.

Now roll with kindling haste the rapid lines, 225  
 From wing to wing the founding battle joins;  
 Batteries and fosses wide, and ranks of fire,  
 In mingled shocks, their thundering blasts expire:  
 Beneath the smoke, when firm advancing bands,  
 With piked arms bent forward in their hands, 230  
 In dreadful silence tread. As, wrapp'd from fight,  
 The nightly ambush moves to secret fight;

So

So rush the raging files, and fightless close,  
In plunging strife, with fierce conflicting foes ;  
They reach, they strike, they struggle o'er the slain, 235  
Deal doubtful blows, and strow with death the plain ;  
Ranks crush on ranks, with equal slaughter gor'd,  
While dripping streams, from every lifted sword,  
Stain the thin, carnag'd hofts ; who still maintain,  
With mutual shocks, the vengeance of the plain. 240  
Till, where brave Williams strove and Campbell fell,  
Unwonted strokes the British force repel :  
The rout begins ; the shatter'd wings, afar,  
Roll back in haste and scatter from the war ;  
They drop their arms, they scour the marshy field ; 245  
Whole squadrons fall and faint battalions yield.  
O'er all the great Observer fix'd his eye,  
Mark'd the whole strife, beheld them fall and fly ;  
He saw where Greene thro' all the combat drove,  
And death and vict'ry with his presence move ; 250  
Beneath his arm saw Marion pour the strife,  
Pickens and Sumner, prodigal of life ;  
He saw young Washington, the child of fame,  
Preserve in fight the honours of his name ;  
Brave Lee, in pride of youth and veteran might, 255  
Swept the dread field, and put whole troops to flight ;

202 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

While numerous chiefs, that equal trophies raise,  
Wrought, not unseen, the deeds of deathless praise.

Columbus now his gallant sons beheld  
In triumph move thro' many a banner'd field; 260  
When o'er the main, from Gallia's friendly shore,  
To the glad strife a host of heroes pour.  
On the tall shaded decks the leaders stand,  
View lessening waves, and hail the crowded strand.  
Brave Rochambeau, in gleamy steel array'd, 265  
Th'ascending scenes with eager joy survey'd;  
Saw Washington, amid his thousands, stride,  
And long'd to toil and conquer by his side.  
Two brother chiefs, in rival lustre, rose,  
Rear'd the long lance, and claim'd the field of foes; 270  
The bold Viominils, of equal fame,  
And eager both to grace the honour'd name.  
Lauzon, beneath his sail, in armour bright,  
Frown'd o'er the wave, impatient for the fight;  
A fiery steed beside the hero stood, 275  
And his broad blade wav'd forward o'er the crowd.  
And now, with eager haste, they tread the coast;  
Thro' grateful regions march their veteran host;  
Join the great Chief, where allied banners lead,  
Demand the foe, and bid the war proceed. 280

Again

Again Columbus cast his anxious eye,  
 Where Britain's standard wav'd along the sky;  
 And, grac'd with spoils of many a field of blood,  
 The bold Cornwallis on a bulwark stood.  
 O'er conquer'd provinces, and towns in flame, 285  
 He mark'd his recent monuments of fame;  
 High-rais'd in air his hands securely hold,  
 With conscious pride, a sheet of cypher'd gold;  
 There, in delusive haste, his skill had grav'd  
 A clime subdu'd, a flag in triumph wav'd: 290  
 A middle realm, by fairer figures known,  
 Adorn'd with fruits, lay bounded for his own;  
 Deep thro' the centre spreads a beauteous bay,  
 Full sails ascend and golden rivers stray;  
 Bright palaces arise, reliev'd in gold, 295  
 And gates and streets the crossing lines unfold;  
 O'er all the mimic scene, his fingers trace  
 His future feat and glory of his race.

While thus the British chief his conquests view'd,  
 And gazing thousands round the ramparts stood, 300  
 Whom future ease and golden dreams employ,  
 The songs of triumph and the feast of joy;  
 Sudden great Washington arose in view,  
 And union'd flags his stately steps pursue;

Great

204 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

Great Gallia's host and young Columbia's pride, 305  
Bend the long march and glitter at his side.

Now on the wave the warring fleets advance,  
And rival ensigns o'er their pinions dance ;  
Graves, from the north, dread Albion's flag unfurl'd  
That wav'd defiance to the watery world ; 310  
De Graffe, from southern isles, conducts his train,  
And shades with Gallic sheets the billowy main.

The swelling sails, as far as eye can sweep,  
Look thro' the skies and awe the shuddering deep.  
As, when the winds of heav'n, from each far pole, 315  
Their adverse storms across the concave roll,  
The fleecy vapours thro' th'expansion run,  
Veil the blue vault, and tremble o'er the sun ;  
Till the dark folding wings together drive,  
And, ridg'd with fires and rock'd with thunders, strive ; 320  
So, bearing thro' the void, at first appear

White clouds of canvass floating on the air ;  
Then frown th' approaching fronts ; the sails are laid,  
And the black decks extend a dreadful shade ;  
While rolling flames and tides of smoke arise, 325  
And thundering cannons rock the seas and skies.  
Where the long bursting fires the cloud disclose,  
Hosts heave in fight and blood the decks o'er-flows ;

Here

BOOK THE SIXTH.

205

Here from the strife toft navies rife to view,  
Drive back to vengeance, and the toil renew, 330  
There fhatter'd barks in squadrons move afar,  
Led thro' the fmoke, and struggling from the war ;  
While hulls half feen, beneath a gaping wave,  
And plunging heroes fill the watery grave.

Now the dark fmoky volumes roll'd away, 335  
And a long line afcended into day ;  
The pinions fwell'd, Britannia's flag arofe,  
And flew the vengeance of triumphing foes.  
When up the bay, Virginian lands that laves,  
The Gallic line its conquering ftandard waves : 340  
Where ftill dread Washington directs his way,  
And fleets and moving realms his voice obey ;  
While the brave Briton, mid the gathering hoft,  
Perceives his glories and his empire loft.

The heav'n-taught Sage in this broad fcene beheld 345  
His fav'rite fons the fates of nations wield ;  
There joyous Lincoln fhone in arms again,  
Nelson and Knox mov'd ardent o'er the plain ;  
Unconquer'd Scammel, mid the clofing strife,  
In fight of vict'ry pour'd his gallant life ; 350  
While Gallic thoufands eager toils fustain,  
And death and danger hearten every train.

Where

206 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

Where Tarleton turns with hopes of flight elate,  
Brave Lauzon moves, and drives him back to fate.  
In one dread view two chosen bands advance, 355  
Columbia's veterans and the pride of France;  
These bold Viominil exalts to fame,  
And those Fayette's conducting guidance claim.  
They lift the sword; with rival glory warm,  
O'er piked ramparts pour the flaming storm, 360  
The mounted thunders brave, and lead the foe,  
In captive squadrons, to the plain below.  
O'er all great Washington his arm extends,  
Points every movement, every toil defends,  
Bids closer strife and bloodier strokes proceed, 365  
New batteries blaze and heavier squadrons bleed;  
Round the pent foe approaching breastworks rise,  
And shells like meteors vault the flaming skies.  
With dire dismay the British chief beheld  
The foe advance, his veterans quit the field; 370  
Despair and slaughter when he turns his eye,  
No hope in combat, and no power to fly;  
De Grasse victorious shakes the shuddering tide,  
Imbody'd nations all the champaign hide;  
Fosses and batteries, growing on the fight, 375  
Still pour new thunders and increase the fight,

Shells.

Shells rain before him, rock the shores around,  
 And crags and balls o'erturn the tented ground ;  
 From post to post the driven ranks retire,  
 The earth in crimson and the skies on fire. 380

Now grateful truce suspends the burning war,  
 And groans and shouts, promiscuous, load the air ;  
 When the tir'd Britons, where the smokes decay,  
 Refign their arms and move in open day.  
 Columbus saw th' immeasurable train, 385

Thousands on thousands, redden all the plain ;  
 Beheld the glorious Leader stand sedate,  
 Hofts in his chain, and banners at his feet ;  
 Nor smile o'er all, nor chide the fallen chief,  
 But share with pitying eye his manly grief. 390

Thus thro' th' extremes of life, in every state,  
 Shines the clear soul, beyond all fortune great ;  
 While smaller minds, the dupes of fickle chance,  
 Slight woes o'erwhelm, and sudden joys entrance.  
 So the full sun, through all the changing sky, 395  
 Nor blasts, nor overpowers, the naked eye ;

Tho' transient splendors, borrow'd from his light,  
 Glance on the mirror and destroy the sight.

He bids brave Lincoln, as they move along,  
 Conduct the triumph of the vanquish'd throng ; 400  
 Who sees, once more, two armies shade the plain,  
 The mighty victors and the captive train.





THE  
VISION OF COLUMBUS.

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BOOK VII.

## ARGUMENT.

*Hymn to Peace. Progress of Arts in America. Fur-trade.  
Fishes. Productions and Commerce. Education. Phi-  
losophical discoveries. Painting. Poetry.*

THE  
VISION OF COLUMBUS.

## BOOK VII.

**H**AIL sacred Peace, who claim'st thy bright abode  
Mid circling faints that grace the throne of God !  
Before his arm, around the shapeless earth,  
Stretch'd the wide heav'ns, and gave to nature birth ;  
Ere morning-stars his glowing chambers hung,  
Or songs of gladness woke an angel's tongue,  
Veil'd in the brightness of th'Almighty's mind,  
In blest repose thy placid form reclin'd.  
Borne through the heav'ns with his creating voice,  
Thy presence bade th'unfolding worlds rejoice,  
Gave to seraphic harps their sounding lays,  
Their joys to angels, and to men their praise.

From scenes of blood, these beauteous shores that stain,  
From gasping friends that press the sanguine plain,  
From fields, long taught in vain thy flight to mourn,  
I rise, delightful Power, and greet thy glad return.

Too long the groans of death, and battle's bray,  
 Have rung discordant through th'unpleasing lay :  
 Let pity's tear its balmy fragrance shed,  
 O'er heroes' wounds and patriot warriors dead ; 20  
 Accept, departed shades, these grateful sighs,  
 Your fond attendants to th'approving skies.

And thou, my earliest friend; my brother dear,  
 Thy fall untimely wakes the tender tear.  
 In youthful sports, in toils, in blood allied,  
 My kind companion and my hopeful guide,  
 When Heav'n's sad summons, from our infant eyes,  
 Had call'd our last, lov'd parent to the skies.  
 Tho' young in arms, and still obscure thy name,  
 Thy bosom panted for the deeds of fame, 30  
 Beneath Montgomery's eye, when, by thy steel,  
 In northern wilds, the frequent savage fell.  
 Yet, hapless Youth ! when thy great leader bled,  
 Thro' the same wound thy parting spirit fled.

But now th'untuneful trump shall grate no more, 35  
 Ye silver streams, no longer swell with gore;  
 Bear from your beauteous banks the crimson stain;  
 With yon retiring navies, to the main.  
 While other views unfolding on my eyes,  
 And happier themes bid bolder numbers rise, 40

Bring,

Bring, bounteous Peace, in thy celestial throng,  
 Life to my soul, and rapture to my song ;  
 Give me to trace, with pure unclouded ray,  
 The arts and virtues that attend thy sway ;  
 To see thy blissful charms, that here descend, 45  
 Through distant realms and endless years extend.

To cast new glories o'er the changing clime,  
 The Seraph now revers'd the flight of time ;  
 Roll'd back the years that led their course before,  
 And stretch'd immense the wild uncultur'd shore ; 50  
 The paths of peaceful Science rais'd to view,  
 And show'd th' ascending crowds that useful arts pursue.

As o'er the canvass, when the master's mind  
 Glows with a future landscape, well design'd,  
 While gardens, vales, and streets and structures rise, 55  
 A new creation to his kindling eyes ;  
 He smiles o'er all ; and, in delightful strife,  
 The pencil moves and calls the whole to life.  
 So, while the great Columbus stood sublime,  
 And saw wild nature clothe the trackless clime ; 60  
 The green banks heave, the winding currents pour,  
 The bays and harbours cleave the yielding shore,  
 The campaigns spread, the solemn groves arise,  
 And the rough mountains lengthen round the skies;

Through all the scene he trac'd, with skillful ken, 65  
 The uniform'd seats and future walks of men ;  
 Mark'd where the fields should bloom, the streamers play,  
 And towns and empires claim their peaceful sway ;  
 When, sudden waken'd by the Angel's hand,  
 They rose in pomp around the cultur'd land. 70

In western wilds, where still the natives tread,  
 From sea to sea an inland commerce spread ;  
 O'er the dim streams, and thro' the gloomy grove,  
 The trading bands their cumb'rous burdens move ;  
 Where furs, and skins, and all th' exhaustless store 75  
 Of midland realms, descended to the shore.

Where summer's furs, along the northern coast,  
 With feeble force dissolve the chains of frost,  
 Prolific waves the scaly nations trace,  
 And tempt the toils of man's laborious race. 80  
 Though rich Peruvian strands, beneath the tide,  
 Their rocks of pearl and sparkling pebbles hide ;  
 Lur'd by the gaudy prize, a vent'rous train  
 Plunge the dark deep and brave the furling main ;  
 Whole realms of slaves the dangerous labours dare, 85  
 To stud a sceptre or emblaze a star :  
 Yet wealthier stores these genial tides display,  
 And busy throngs with nobler spoils repay.

The

BOOK THE SEVENTH.

215

The Hero saw the hardy hofts advance,  
 Cast the long line and aim the barbed lance ; 90  
 Load the deep floating barks, and bear abroad  
 To each far clime the life-sustaining food ;  
 While growing swarms by nature's hand supplied,  
 People the shoals and fill the fruitful tide.

Where southern streams thro' broad savannahs bend, 95  
 The rice-clad vales their verdant rounds extend ;  
 Tobago's plant its leaf expanding yields,  
 The maize luxuriant clothes a thousand fields ;  
 Steeds, herds and flocks o'er northern regions rove,  
 Embrown the hill, and wanton thro' the grove ; 100  
 The wood-lands wide their sturdy honours bend,  
 The pines, the live-oaks, to the shores descend ;  
 Along the strand the crooked keels arise,  
 The huge hulls heave, and masts ascend the skies ;  
 Launch'd in the deep o'er eastern waves they fly, 105  
 Feed southern isles, and Europe's realms supply.

Silent he gaz'd : when thus the guardian Power :—  
 While useful toils like these adorn the shore,  
 The liberal arts with more distinguish'd praise,  
 Shall crown their labours and thy rapture raise. 110  
 Each orient realm, the former pride of earth,  
 Where men and science drew their ancient birth,



Shall soon behold, on this enlighten'd coast,  
 Their fame transcended, and their glory lost.  
 That train of arts, that grac'd mankind before, 115  
 Warm'd the glad Sage or taught the Muse to soar,  
 Here with superior sway their progress trace,  
 And aid the triumphs of thy filial race;  
 While rising crowds, with genius unconfin'd,  
 Thro' deep inventions lead th' astonish'd mind, 120  
 Wide o'er the world their name unrivall'd raise,  
 And bind their temples with immortal bays.

In youthful minds to wake a virtuous flame,  
 To nurse the arts, and point the paths of fame,  
 Behold their liberal fires, with guardian care, 125  
 Thro' all the realms their seats of science rear.  
 Great without pomp the modest mansions stand,  
 Harvard and Yale and Princeton grace the land,  
 Penn's peaceful dome his youths with rapture greet,  
 On James's bank Virginian muses meet, 130  
 York's beauteous town her college walls command,  
 Bosom'd in groves, see growing Dartmouth stand;  
 While, o'er the realm reflecting solar fires,  
 On yon tall hill, Rhode-Island's seat aspires.

O'er all the shore, with sails and cities gay, 135  
 And where rude hamlets stretch their inland sway,

With

With humbler walls unnumber'd schools arise,  
 And home-bred freemen seize the solid prize.  
 In no blest land has Science rear'd her fane,  
 And fix'd so firm her peace-diffusing reign ; 140  
 Each rustic here, that turns the furrow'd foil,  
 The maid, the youth, that ply mechanic toil,  
 In freedom nurs'd, in useful arts inur'd,  
 Know their just claims, and see their rights secur'd.  
 And lo! descending from the seats of art, 145  
 The growing throngs for active scenes depart ;  
 In various garbs they tread the welcome land,  
 Swords at their side or statutes in their hand,  
 With healing powers bid dire diseases cease,  
 Or sound the tidings of eternal peace. 150  
 In no blest land has fair religion shone,  
 And fix'd so firm her everlasting throne.  
 Where o'er the realms those spacious temples shine,  
 Frequent and full the throng'd assemblies join ;  
 There, fir'd with virtue's animating flame, 155  
 The preacher's talk persuasive sages claim ;  
 The task, for angels great—in early youth,  
 To lead whole nations in the walks of truth,  
 To shed the beams of knowledge on the mind,  
 In bands of peace to harmonize mankind, 160  
 To

218 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS;

To life, to happiness, to joys above,  
 The soften'd soul with ardent zeal to move.  
 For this the voice of Heav'n, in early years,  
 Tun'd the glad songs of life-inspiring fears;  
 For this consenting seraphs leave the skies, 165  
 Reveal the path of life, and teach them how to rise.

Tho' different faiths their various orders show,  
 That seem discordant to the train below;  
 They tread the same bright steps, and smoothe the road,  
 Lights of the world and messengers of God. 170  
 So the galaxy broad o'er heav'n displays  
 Of various stars the same unbounded blaze;  
 Where great and small their mingling rays unite,  
 And earth and skies repay the friendly light.

While thus the Hero view'd the sacred band, 175  
 Mov'd by one voice and guided by one hand,  
 He saw the heav'ns unfold, a form descend,  
 Down the dim skies his arm of light extend,  
 From God's own altar bear a living coal,  
 Touch their glad lips and brighten every soul; 180  
 To listening crowds from each accordant tongue,  
 O'er the wide clime these welcome accents rung:—

Ye darkling race of poor distressed mankind,  
 For bliss still groping and to virtue blind,  
 Hear

BOOK THE SEVENTH.

219

Hear from on high th' Almighty's voice descend ; 185

Ye heav'ns, be silent, and thou earth, attend.

I reign the Lord of life ; I fill the round

Where stars and skies and angels know their bound ;

Before all years, beyond all thought I live,

Light, form and motion, time and space I give ; 190

Touch'd by this hand, all worlds within me roll,

Mine eye their splendor, and my breath their soul.

Earth, with her lands and seas, my power proclaims,

There moves my spirit, there descend my flames ;

Grac'd with the semblance of the Maker's mind, 195

Rise from the darksome dust the reas'ning kind,

With powers of thought to trace th' eternal cause,

That all his works to one great system draws,

View the full chain of love, th' all-ruling plan,

That binds the God, the angel, and the man, 200

That gives all hearts to feel, all minds to know

The bliss of harmony, of strife the woe.

This heav'n of concord, who of mortal strain

Shall dare oppose—he lifts his arm in vain ;

Th' avenging universe on him shall roll 205

Th' intended wrong, and overwhelm his guilty soul.

Then lend your audience ; hear, ye sons of earth,

Rise into life, behold the promis'd birth ;

From

From pain to joy, from guilt to glory rise; no more to lie  
 Be babes on earth, be seraphs in the skies;—  
 O'er mortal scenes exalt this deathless mind;  
 And seize the blessings of a nobler kind;  
 That wait your choice; that crown, in worlds above,  
 The faintest host, the first-born sons of love;  
 View the glad throng, the glorious triumph join;  
 Their paths pursue, and in their splendor shine;  
 Hail, with seraphic smiles, the blest abode;  
 Assume their spotless robes, and reign beside your God.

Thus heard the Hero—while his roving view  
 Trac'd other crowds that liberal arts pursue;  
 When thus the Seraph:—Lo; a sapient band  
 The torch of science flaming in their hand  
 Thro' nature's range their ardent souls aspire,  
 Or wake to life the canvass and the lyre.  
 Fixt in sublimest thought, behold them rise,  
 Superior worlds unfolding to their eyes;  
 Heav'n in their view unveils th' eternal plan,  
 And gives new guidance to the paths of man.

See on yon dark'ning height bold Franklin tread,  
 Heav'n's awful thunders rolling o'er his head;  
 Convolving clouds the billowy skies deform;  
 And fork'y flames emblaze the black'ning storm.

See

See the descending streams around him burn,  
 Glance on his rod, and with his guidance turn ;  
 He bids conflicting heav'ns their blasts expire,      235  
 Quells the fierce blaze and holds th' imprisson'd fire.  
 No more, when folding storms the vault o'erspread,  
 The livid glare shall strike thy race with dread ;  
 Nor towers nor temples, shuddering with the sound,  
 Sink in the flames and spread destruction round.      240  
 His daring toils, the threat'ning blast that wait,  
 Shall teach mankind to ward the bolts of fate ;  
 The pointed steel o'er-top the lofty spire,  
 And lead from trembling walls the harmless fire ;  
 In his glad fate while distant worlds rejoice,      245  
 Far as the lightnings shine or thunders raise their voice.

See the sage Rittenhouse, with ardent eye,  
 Lift the long tube and pierce the starry sky ;  
 Clear in his view the circling systems roll,  
 And broader splendors gild the central pole.      250  
 He marks what laws th' eccentric wand'ers bind,  
 Copies creation in his forming mind,  
 And bids, beneath his hand, in semblance rise,  
 With mimic orbs, the labours of the skies,  
 Here wond'ring crowds with raptur'd eye behold      255  
 The spangled heav'ns their mystic maze unfold ;

While

While each glad sage his splendid hall may grace,  
 With all the spheres that cleave th' ethereal space.

To guide the sailor in his wandering way,  
 See Godfrey's \* toils reverse the beams of day. 260

His lifted quadrant to the eye displays  
 From adverse skies the counteracting rays;  
 And marks, as devious sails bewilder'd roll,  
 Each nice gradation from the steadfast pole.

See, West with glowing life the canvass warms; 265

His sovereign hand creates impassion'd forms,  
 Spurns the cold critic rules, to seize the heart,  
 And boldly bursts the former bounds of Art.  
 No more her powers to ancient lore confin'd,

He gives her liberal aid to all mankind; 270

And calls to life each patriot, chief, or sage,  
 Garb'd in the dress and drapery of his age.

Again bold Regulus to death returns,

Again her falling Wolfe Britannia mourns;

\* It is less from national vanity, than from a regard to truth and a desire of rendering personal justice, that the author wishes to rectify the history of Science in the circumstance here alluded to. The instrument, known by the name of Hadley's Quadrant, now universally in use and generally attributed to Dr. Hadley, was invented by Mr. Godfrey of Philadelphia. See *Jefferson's Notes on Virginia*.

Edward in arms to frowning combat moves, 275  
 Or, won to pity by the queen he loves,  
 Spares the devoted *Six*, whose deathless deed  
 Preserv'd the town his vengeance doom'd to bleed.

With rival force, see Copley's pencil trace  
 The air of action and the charms of face. 280  
 Fair in his tints unfold the scenes of state,  
 The senate listens and the peers debate ;  
 Pale consternation every heart appals,  
 In act to speak, while death-struck Chatham falls.  
 He bids dread Calpe cease to shake the waves, 285  
 While Elliott's arm the host of Bourbon saves ;  
 O'er the wing'd batteries sinking in the flood,  
 Mid flames and darkness, drench'd in hostile blood,  
 Britannia's sons extend their generous hand,  
 To snatch their foes from death, and bear them to the land.

Fir'd with the martial toils, that bath'd in gore  
 His brave companions on his native shore,  
 Trumbull with daring hand the strife recalls,  
 He shades with night Quebec's beleagur'd walls,  
 Mid flashing flames, that round the turrets rise, 295  
 Blind carnage raves and great Montgomery dies.  
 On Charlestown's height, thro' floods of rolling fire,  
 Brave Warren falls, and fallen hosts retire ;

While



224 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

While other plains of death, that gloom the skies,  
And chiefs immortal, o'er his canvass rife. 300

See rural seats of innocence and ease,  
High-tufted towers and walks of waving trees,  
The white waves dashing on the craggy shores,  
Meand'ring streams and meads of spangled flowers,  
Where nature's sons their wild excursions lead, 305  
In just design, from Taylor's pencil spread.

Steward and Brown the moving portrait raise,  
Each rival stroke the force of life conveys;  
See circling Beauties round their tablets stand,  
And rise immortal from their plastic hand; 310  
Each breathing form preserves its wonted grace,  
And all the soul stands speaking in the face.

Two kindred arts the swelling statue heave,  
Wake the dead wax; and teach the stone to live.  
While the bold chisel claims the rugged strife, 315  
To rouse the sceptred marble into life;  
See Wright's fair hands the livelier fire controul,  
In waxen forms she breathes th' impassion'd soul;  
The pencil'd tint o'er moulded substance glows,  
And different powers th' unrivall'd art compose. 320  
Grief, rage and fear beneath her fingers start,  
Roll the wild eye and pour the burning heart,

While

While slumbering heroes wait her wakening call,  
And distant ages fill the story'd hall.

To equal fame ascends thy tuneful throng, 325  
The boast of genius and the pride of song ;  
Warm'd with the scenes that grace their various clime,  
Their lays shall triumph o'er the lapse of time.

With keen-ey'd glance thro' nature's walks to pierce,  
With all the powers and every charm of verse, 330  
Each science opening in his ample mind,  
His fancy glowing and his taste refin'd,  
See Trumbull lead the train. His skilful hand  
Hurls the keen darts of Satire thro' the land ;  
Pride, knavery, dullness, feel his mortal stings, 335  
And list'ning virtue triumphs while he sings ;  
Proud Albion's sons, victorious now no more,  
In guilt retiring from the wasted shore,  
Strive their curst cruelties to hide in vain—  
The world shall learn them from his deathless strain. 340

On glory's wing to raise the ravish'd soul,  
Beyond the bounds of earth's benighted pole,  
For daring Dwight the epic Muse sublime  
Hails her new empire on the western clime.  
Fir'd with the themes by seers seraphic sung, 345  
Heav'n in his eye, and rapture on his tongue,

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For daring Dwight the epic Muse sublime  
Hails her new empire on the western clime.  
Fir'd with the themes by seers seraphic sung, 345  
Heav'n in his eye, and rapture on his tongue,

His voice divine revives the Promis'd Land,  
 The Heav'n-taught Leader and the chosen band.  
 In Hanniel's fate, proud faction finds her doom,  
 Ai's midnight flames light nations to their tomb, 350  
 In visions bright supernal joys are given,  
 And all the dread futurities of heaven.

While freedom's cause his patriot bosom warms,  
 In counsel sage, nor inexpert in arms,  
 See Humphreys glorious from the field retire, 355  
 Sheathe the glad sword and string the sounding lyre ;  
 That lyre which erst, in hours of dark despair,  
 Rous'd the sad realms to urge th' unfinish'd war.  
 O'er fallen friends, with all the strength of woe,  
 His heart-felt sighs in moving numbers flow ; 360  
 His country's wrongs, her duties, dangers, praise,  
 Fire his full soul and animate his lays ;  
 Immortal Washington with joy shall own  
 So fond a fav'rite and so brave a son.

THE  
VISION OF COLUMBUS.

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BOOK VIII.

## A. R. G U M E N T.

*The vision suspended. Causes of the slow progress that Science has hitherto made in the world, and of its frequent interruptions. Its ancient compared with its modern establishment. Consequences of the latter. Causes of the apparent uncertainty in matters of theology. Superstition built on the passions; scepticism on the reasoning power. Necessity and happy effect of the united force of reason and the passions in the discovery of truth.*

## T H E

## VISION OF COLUMBUS.

## B O O K VIII.

**A**ND now the Angel, from the trembling fight,  
 Veil'd the wide world—when sudden shades of night  
 Move o'er th' etherial vault ; the starry train  
 Paint their dim forms beneath the placid main ;  
 While earth and heav'n, around the Hero's eye,      5  
 Seem arch'd immense, like one surrounding sky.  
 Still, from the Power superior splendors shone,  
 The height emblazing like a radiant throne ;  
 To converse sweet the soothing shades invite,  
 And on the Guide the Hero fix'd his fight.      10

Kind messenger of Heav'n, he thus began,  
 Why this progressive lab'ring search of man ?  
 If man, by wisdom form'd, hath power to reach  
 These opening truths that following ages teach,  
 Step after step, thro' devious paths to wind,      15  
 And fill at last the measure of the mind,



236 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS

Why did not Heav'n, with one unclouded ray,  
 All human arts and reason's powers display?  
 That mad opinions, and sectarian strife  
 Might find no place t' imbitter human life. 20

To whom th' Angelic Power :—To thee 'tis given  
 To hold high converse and enquire of Heaven,  
 To mark untravers'd ages, and to trace  
 The promis'd truths that wait thy kindred race.  
 Know then, the counsels of the Maker's mind, 25  
 Thro' nature's range, progressive paths design'd.  
 Progressive works at every step we trace,  
 Thro' all duration and around all space ;  
 Till power and wisdom all their parts combine,  
 And full perfection speaks the work divine. 30

So the first week beheld the progress rise,  
 Which form'd the earth and arch'd the ambient skies.  
 Dark and imperfect first, the formless frame  
 From vacant night to crude existence came ;  
 Light starr'd the heav'ns and suns were taught their bound,  
 Winds woke their force, and floods their centre found ;  
 Earth's kindred elements, in joyous strife,  
 Warm'd the glad glebe to vegetable life,  
 Till sense and power and action claim'd their place,  
 And godlike reason crown'd th' imperial race. 40

'Tis

'Tis thus meek Science, from creation's birth,  
 With time's long circuit treads the darksome earth,  
 Leads in progressive march th' enquiring mind,  
 To curb its passions and its bliss to find,  
 To guide the reas'ning power, and smoothe the road, 45  
 That leads mankind to nature and to God.

In elder times, when savage tribes began,  
 A few strong passions sway'd the wayward man ;  
 Envy, revenge, and fateless lust of power  
 Fir'd the dark soul, and stain'd the fields with gore ; 50  
 Till growing bands superior strength supply'd,  
 And wall'd their cities with the towers of pride.  
 And when by force the infant arts arose,  
 They hur'd the envy of surrounding foes ;  
 Some savage band would seize the peaceful prey, 55  
 And blast the learning, to obstruct the way.

Thus, at the Muse's call, when Thebes arose,  
 And Science dawn'd where nurt'ring Nilus flows,  
 Rich with the toils of art, bold structures blaz'd,  
 And barb'rous nations envy'd as they gaz'd ; 60  
 The wond'rous pyramid, the tempting store,  
 The charm of conquest, and the grasp of power,  
 Lur'd the dark world, with envious pride elate,  
 To whelm fair Science in the wrecks of state ;

232 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

Till Thebes and Memphis nameless ruins lie, 65  
And crush the race that rais'd them to the sky.

O'er Chaldea's plains her sons began to stray,  
To count the stars, and trace their wand'ring way;  
Where the glad shepherd learn'd the skies to read,  
His loves to cherish and his flocks to feed; 70  
Till haughty Babel stretch'd an envy'd sway,  
And furious millions warr'd the arts away.

Ilissus' banks display'd a happier seat,  
Where every Muse and all the virtues meet,  
To grace the Grecian states; then, steering far, 75  
Driv'n by the close pursuit of vengeful war,  
She wings her flight, a western region gains,  
And finds a home on Latium's friendly plains.

But force and conquest follow where she leads,  
Her labours changing to heroic deeds, 80  
Rome's haughty Genius, taught by her to soar,  
With pride of learning swell'd the pride of power,  
From Brits, from Scythians pluck'd the laurel crown,  
And deem'd by right th' unletter'd world his own.

Till, fir'd by insult, vengeful myriads rose, 85  
And all the north pour'd forth the swarming foes;  
Like sweeping tempests in embattled heaven,  
When fire and blackness streak the sails of even,

The

# BOOK THE EIGHTH.

233

The grisly Goths' imbodied nations rise,  
The toils of ages spread the tempting prize ;  
Spain, Latium, Afric, feed the furious flame,  
And hapless Science mourns her buried name.

90

As when the sun moves o'er the flaming zone,  
Careering clouds attend his fervid throne,  
Superior splendors, in his course display'd,  
Proclaim the progress of a heavier shade ;

95

Thus where the Power her ancient circuit held,  
Her shining course succeeding darkness veil'd.  
Fear, interest, envy bound her narrow reign,  
A coast her walk, the Hellespont her main,

100

Ere Goya's magnet pointed to the pole,  
Or taught thy bark o'er wider worlds to roll.

At length the scene a nobler pomp assumes,  
A milder beam dispels the Gothic glooms ;  
In sober majesty, and charms of peace,  
The goddess moves, and cheers her filial race,  
Lifts bolder wings, with surer flight to soar,  
No more to rest, till heav'n illumines no more.

105

At once, consenting nations rise to fame ;  
Here Charles's genius wakes the Gallic name,  
There Alfred aids the universal cause,  
And opens the source of liberty and laws ;

110

She

234 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

She claims in Greece her long deserted home,  
 In wild Germania rears her Gothic dome;  
 Extends her sway o'er blest Arabian plains 115  
 Where her own Caliph, liberal Rachid, reigns,  
 While all the climes confess her spreading power,  
 From farthest Ganges to th' Atlantic shore.

Ev'n horrid war, that erst her course withstood,  
 And overwhelm'd, so oft, her peaceful shrines in blood, 120  
 Now leads thro' paths unseen her glorious way,  
 Widens her limits, and secures her sway.  
 From Europe's realms the Christian zealots pour  
 In crowding millions to the Asian shore;  
 Mankind their prey, th' unmeaning Cross their pride, 125  
 And sacred vengeance their delusive guide.  
 Zeal points their way thro' famine, toil and blood,  
 To aid with arms th' imagin'd cause of God;  
 Till fields of slaughter overwhelm the broken host,  
 Their pride appall'd, their countless myriads lost, 130  
 The sad remains to Europe's shores return,  
 And there transplant the arts that eastern climes adorn.

The rival barons, whom ambition draws  
 Their wealth to lavish in the Holy Cause,  
 In peace retiring, yield the kingly crown, 135  
 And blend their counsels to exalt the throne.

While

While slaves, no longer purchas'd with the foil,  
 Half wake to freedom and protected toil,  
 Exchange the feudal for the regal reign,  
 In quest of commerce tempt the friendly main, 140  
 Find in the magnet's power a faithful guide,  
 And stretch the sail o'er every distant tide.

See Rome once more the finer arts attend,  
 Her groves rewardable and her walls ascend;  
 Bologna's \* learned feats arise to fame, 145  
 And, Paris, thine superior honours claim;  
 In rival splendor fair Oxonia smiles,  
 And spreads her blessings o'er the British isles;  
 There, like the star that leads the orient day,  
 Chaucer directs his tuneful sons their way. 150  
 See bold Copernicus with ardent soul  
 Explore the stars and teach their orbs to roll;  
 And Faustus, † with a happier stretch of mind,  
 Awakes th' unbounded genius of mankind:

\* The universities of Bologna, Paris and Oxford, as to the dates of their institution, are placed in this order by Dr. Robertson in his introduction to the history of Charles V.

† Perhaps there is no subject in the history of art, on which the assertions of writers have been so various with respect to the name of the inventor, as on that of printing. I have ascribed this invention to John Faustus; though I can scarcely recollect on which of the numerous authorities I grounded my opinion. One would think a discovery of this nature would have been more

Wide o'er the world his letter'd types display 155  
The works of Science, and confirm her sway.

Bold chivalry romantic aids her cause ;  
In honour's name the knight his falchion draws ;  
Lur'd by the charms that grace the guardless Fair,  
To virtue's cries he bends his generous care, 160  
Thro' toil and pain in quest of glory roves,  
Braves death and danger for the maid he loves ;  
While fir'd by gallantry, the generous art  
Improves the manners and amends the heart.

When pride and rapine held their vengeful sway, 165  
And praise pursu'd where conquest led the way,  
Nature's sereneest grace, the female mind,  
By rough-brow'd power neglected and confin'd.  
Unheeded sigh'd, mid empire's rude alarms,  
Unknown its virtues, and enslav'd its charms. 170  
So the lone wild-rose opes the sweetest bloom,  
To scent th' unconscious thorn, and wither round the tomb.

more likely than any other to have thrown a splendor upon its own origin, and to have perpetuated its own history. But the obscurity in which it is involved is probably owing to this circumstance, that the art was at first considered as diabolical; those who first practised it were persecuted; and as they fled from one country to another, they were probably obliged to change their names. The man who first carried the art into France, was taken up as a forcerer, and a prosecution was carried on against him as such, by the doctors of law.

Blest

# BOOK THE EIGHTH.

237

Blest Science then, to rugged toils confin'd,  
 Rose but to conquer and enslave mankind,  
 O'er gentle passions spread a harsh controul, 175  
 And wak'd the glare of grandeur in the soul.  
 She taught the lance to thirst for human gore,  
 She taught pale avarice to swell the store,  
 Taught milder arts the peaceful prize to yield,  
 Her Muse to thunder thro' th' embattled field; 180  
 In ruin'd realms to build the shrine of fame,  
 And call celestial aid to raise a tyrant's name.  
 In chains and darkness mourn'd the hapless Fair,  
 The price of gold, th' insulted prize of war,  
 While fires, unfeeling, claim'd the sordid dower, 185  
 And nymphs were sold the slaves of lust and power.

A happier morn now brightens in the skies,  
 Superior arts, in peaceful glory, rise;  
 While softer virtues claim the public care,  
 And crowns of laurel grace the rising Fair. 190  
 While states and empires, policies and laws,  
 Lure the firm patriot in the bolder cause,  
 To stem the tide of power or guide the war,  
 Like thee to suffer and like thee to dare—  
 With equal honour, as with softer grace, 195  
 The well-taught matron guides the infant race.

On



On this broad base while Science rears her fanè,  
 New toils and triumphs fill her glorious train,  
 Thro' fairer fields she leads th' expanding mind,  
 Glads every clime, and dignifies mankind. 200  
 Tho' still the pride of kings the strife maintains,  
 Their hosts wide sweeping o'er the seas and plains;  
 With engines new they rend the harmless air,  
 And lose the horrors in the pomp of war.

While the glad sage to useful labours soars, 205  
 Tempts other seas and unknown worlds explores,  
 Bids feeble tribes display their powers abroad,  
 And regions smile without the waste of blood.

Then, while the daring Muse, from heav'nly quires,  
 With life divine the raptur'd bard inspires, 210  
 With bolder hand he strikes the trembling string,  
 Virtues and loves and deeds like thine to sing.  
 No more with vengeful chiefs and furious gods,  
 Old Ocean crimson and Olympus nods,  
 Nor heav'ns, convulsive, rend the dark profound, 215  
 Nor Titans groan beneath the heaving ground;  
 But milder themes shall wake the poets song,  
 Life in the soul and rapture on the tongue;  
 To moral charms he bids the world attend,  
 Fraternal nations social ties extend, 220

Thro'

# BOOK THE EIGHTH.

239

Thro' union'd realms the rage of conquest cease,  
 War sink in night, and nature smile in peace.  
 Then shall he soar sublimer heights, and rove  
 O'er brighter walks, and purer climes of love ;  
 Rapt into vision of the blest abode,

225

From Angel-harps to catch th' inspiring God ;  
 Thro' heav'ns o'er-canopy'd by heav'ns, behold  
 New suns ascend and other skies unfold,  
 Seraphs and system'd worlds around him shine,  
 And lift his mortal strains to harmony divine.

230

To these superior flights, the Chief-rejoin'd,  
 If future years shall raise the roving mind ;  
 Progressive arts exalt the soul on high,  
 Peace rule the earth, and faith unfold the sky ;  
 Say, how shall truths like these to man be given,  
 Of Science find the limits mark'd by Heaven ?

235

In every age since reas'ning pride began,  
 And heav'n's dread Sire reveal'd himself to man,  
 What different faiths the changing race inspire !  
 What blind devotions and unhallow'd fire !

240

What gods of human form and savage power  
 Cold fear could fashion or mad zeal adore !  
 These crowd their temples, those their names despise,  
 In each dire cause th' exulting martyr dies ;

Till,

240 THE VISION OF COLUMBUS:

Till, sense renounc'd, and virtue driv'n afar, 245  
 Rage fires the realms, religion sounds to war;  
 And the first blessing Heav'n for earth design'd,  
 Proves the severest curse that waits mankind.

Say then, my Guide,—if heav'nly wisdom gave  
 To erring man a life beyond the grave— 250  
 If one creative Power, one living soul  
 Produc'd all beings and preserves the whole;  
 Who, thron'd in light, with full perfection blest,  
 Mid changing works, enjoys eternal rest;  
 While man, still grov'ling, passionate, and blind, 255  
 Wars with his neighbour and destroys his kind—  
 Say, what connecting chain, in endless line,  
 Links earth to heav'n, and mortal with divine,  
 Applies alike to every age and clime,  
 And lifts the soul beyond the bounds of time; 260  
 And when shall Science trace th' immortal way,  
 And hail religion in her native day?

The Power return'd :—Thy race shall soon behold  
 Reason expand and moral lights unfold;  
 While Science rises, freed from pedant pride, 265  
 Of truth the standard and of faith the guide.

The passions wild, that sway the changing mind,  
 The reasoning powers, her watchful guides design'd,

Each,

When, cloth'd majestic in the robes of state,  
 Mov'd by one voice, in general council meet  
 The fathers of all empires : 'twas the place,  
 Near the first footsteps of the human race,  
 Where wretched men, first wandering from their God 395  
 Began their feuds and led their tribes abroad.  
 In this mid region, this delightful clime,  
 Rear'd by whole realms, to brave the wrecks of time  
 A spacious structure rose, sublimely great,  
 The last resort, th' unchanging scene of state. 400  
 On rocks of adamant the walls ascend,  
 Tall columns heave, and Parian arches bend ;  
 High o'er the golden roofs, the rising spires,  
 Far in the concave meet the solar fires ;  
 Four blazing fronts, with gates unfolding high, 405  
 Look, with immortal splendor, round the sky :  
 Hither the delegated fires ascend,  
 And all the cares of every clime attend.  
 As the fair first-born messengers of Heaven,  
 To whom the care of stars and suns is given, 410  
 When the last circuit of their winding spheres  
 Hath finish'd time and mark'd their sum of years,  
 From all the bounds of space ( their labours done )  
 Shall wing their triumphs to th' eternal throne ;

Each, from his far, dim sky, illumes the road, 415  
 And sails and centres tow'rd the mount of God;  
 There, in mid heav'n, their honour'd seats to spread,  
 And ope th' untarnish'd volumes of the dead :  
 So, from all climes of earth, the gathering throng,  
 In ships and chariots, shape their course along, 420  
 Reach with unwonted speed the place assign'd  
 To hea and give the counsels of mankind.

Now the dread concourse, where the arches bend,  
 Pour thro' by thousands, and their seats ascend.  
 Far as the centred eye can range around, 425  
 Or the deep trumpet's solemn voice resound,  
 Long rows of reverend fires, sublime, extend,  
 And cares of worlds on every brow suspend.  
 High in the front, for manlier virtues known,  
 A fire elect, in peerless grandeur, shone ; 430  
 And rising op'd the universal cause,  
 To give each realm its limit and its laws ;  
 Bid the last breath of dire contention cease,  
 And bind all regions in the leagues of peace,  
 Bid one great empire, with extensive sway, 435  
 Spread with the sun, and bound the walks of day,  
 One centred system, one all-ruling soul,  
 Live thro' the parts, and regulate the whole.

Here,

BOOK THE NINTH.

275

Here, said the Angel with a blisful smile,

Behold the fruits of thy unwearied toil.

440

To yon far regions of descending day,

Thy swelling pinions led th' untrodden way,

And taught mankind advent'rous deeds to dare,

To trace new seas and peaceful empires rear ;

Hence, by fraternal hands, their sails unfurl'd,

445

Have wav'd, at last, in union o'er the world.

Then let thy stedfast soul no more complain

Of dangers brav'd and griefs endur'd in vain,

Of courts insidious, envy's poison'd stings,

The loss of empire, and the frown of kings ;

450

While these bright views thy troubled thoughts compose,

To spurn the vengeance of insulting foes ;

And all the joys descending ages gain,

Repay thy labours and remove thy pain.

T H E E N D.















